

Many people study the Bible/Old Testament for a variety of reasons: as great literature; for historical and cultural information of the ancient world; as the Word of God.

In this unit you will also study the geography and archeology of the Old Testament world. It will be important to refer to the maps located in the middle section of the Mercer Dictionary as you read about areas such as the Fertile Crescent and Mesopotamia.

FOR SECTION A

READ:

MDB: "Old Testament"

NOAB: xxxi-xxxiii OT, "Introduction to the Old Testament"

FOR SECTION B

READ:

MDB: "Form/Gattung"; "Sources, Literary"; "Tradition in the Old Testament"; "Canon"; "Apocryphal Literature"

NOAB: xxi-xxii, "The Numbers and Sequence of the Books of the Bible"; iii-xii AP, "Introduction to the Apocryphal and Deuterocanonical Books"

FOR SECTION C

READ:

MDB: "Bible in America"; "Bible in Western Literature"; "Literature, Bible as"; "Bible, Authority of"

NOAB: 400-406 "English Versions of the Bible"

ASSIGNMENT #1:

Write a 3-5 page paper describing the Old Testament to someone who has never heard of it. Include answers to the following in your description: How many books are in the Old Testament? What types of literature are in the Old Testament? What language(s) was it written in? How did we get the Old Testament? Why do people study it? Why do you study it?

FOR SECTION D

READ:

MDB: Map in middle section--plate 2; "Fertile Crescent"; "Mesopotamia"; "Palestine, Geography of"; "Archaeology"

NOAB: 407-410 "Survey of the Geography, History, and Archaeology of the Bible Lands"

ASSIGNMENT #2:

Answer the study questions in the appendix on the "Geography and Archeology of the Old Testament World."

UNIT II: CREATION OF THE WORLD AND CREATION OF ISRAEL

Genesis literally means "beginnings." The Old Testament book of Genesis speaks of the beginnings of the world and humanity (chapters 1-11). It also speaks of the beginnings of God's specific relationship with Israel (chapters 12-50).

The story of God's special relationship with Israel's ancestors is continued in the book of Exodus. It is here that we read about God's dramatic deliverance of the descendants of the ancestors and daring act of commitment through covenant and law.

These stories of creation, sin, punishment, slavery, deliverance, covenant, and commandments are at the core of Jewish and Christian belief. They are stories that tell our story. We find ourselves in their pages and we are relieved to find that God is a god "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means clearing the guilty. . . (Exodus 34:6-7).

FOR SECTION A.1

READ:

Genesis chapters 1 and 2

MDB: "Genesis, Book of"; "Creation"; "Cosmology"; "Sources of the Pentateuch"

ASSIGNMENT #3:

Answer "reading questions for Genesis 1 and 2" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION A.2

READ:

Genesis chapters 3 through 11

MDB: "Genealogy in the Old Testament"; "Generation"; "Fall"; "Serpent"; "Satan in the Old Testament"; "Cain and Abel"; "Flood"; "Babel, Tower of"

ASSIGNMENT #4:

Complete the exercise on "the six-part pattern of crime, punishment and mercy in Genesis 3-11" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION B.1 and 2

READ:

Genesis chapters 12-36

MDB: "Ancestor"; "Patriarch"; "Promise"; "Abraham"; "Sarah"; "Hagar"; "Ishmael"; "Isaac"; "Family"; "Marriage in the Old Testament"; "Inheritance in the Old Testament"; "Women in the Old Testament"

ASSIGNMENT #5:

Answer "reading questions on the ancestors: Genesis 12-36" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION C. 1 and 2

READ:

Genesis chapters 37 through 50; Exodus chapters 1 and 2

MDB: "Joseph"; "Egypt"; "Exodus, Book of"; "Blacks in the Old Testament"; "Ethiopia"; "Nubia"; "Bible and Liberation Movements"

ASSIGNMENT #6:

Write a 2-3 page reflection paper on Africa and Israel's beginnings. Address the following questions: What is the significance of Egypt's connection with Africa? Slaves in the United States embraced the Exodus as a story of liberation. What new perspectives would be added to this story if the pharaoh were from Africa? What does this say about the struggle for liberation being more than a black/white issue? What does this say about lateral or horizontal violence in the gay and lesbian community?

FOR SECTION C.3

READ:

Exodus 3

MDB: "Theophany"; "God Language, Inclusive"; "God"; "God, Names for"; "Tetragrammaton"

ASSIGNMENT #7:

Write a 2-3 page reflection paper exploring the relationship between the revelation of the divine name YHWH and the importance of inclusive language and images for God.

FOR SECTION C.4.-6.

READ:

Exodus chapters 4 through 15 and 19 through 25; Leviticus chapters 17 through 26

MDB: "Moses"; "Plagues"; "Red Sea/Reed Sea; "Exodus"; "Miracles;" "Covenant"; "Law in the Old Testament"; "Ten Commandments"; "Monotheism"; "Feasts and Festivals"; "Tabernacle"; ""Ark"; "Priests"; "Levi/Levites"; "Leviticus, book of;" "clean,unclean;" "holiness in the Old Testament"

ASSIGNMENT #8:

Answer study questions on "Moses, the plagues, exodus, covenant and law" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION C.7

READ:

Exodus chapters 16 and 17; Numbers chapters 10 through 12 and 16

MDB: "Desert"; "Numbers, Book of"; "manna"

ASSIGNMENT #9:

Write a 2-3 page reflection paper on the "paradox of freedom" with regard to the wilderness wanderings after the exodus. What sort of parallels does this paradoxical nature of freedom have for the gay and lesbian community? (eg. coming out) UFMCC?

UNIT III: ISRAEL IN THE LAND OF CANAAN

It is not until the book of Joshua that God's promise of land to the ancestors is fulfilled. God made it clear to the Israelites that it was not anything that they had done which "won" them the land. Yahweh had given the land as a gift and the Israelites were to live responsibly in the land, always remembering to rely on God for their well being. The motto of the books of Deuteronomy through Kings is: "If Israel obeys Yahweh and is faithful to the covenant, they will be successful in the land. If Israel disobeys Yahweh and is unfaithful to the covenant, they will be unsuccessful in the land."

There has been much debate about this period of Israel's history. Biblical and historical evidence seem contradictory when it comes to describing how Israel actually inhabited the land. In some accounts, it seems to have been a swift military victory (Joshua), in other accounts it seems to have been a gradual settlement (Judges 1:1-2:5). There is still other evidence which would indicate that Israel's settlement of Canaan was a

combination of disenfranchised Canaanites and Israelites joining forces to overthrow an oppressive Canaanite government.

Other areas of debate include the violent and exclusive nature of the story. Persons who read this part of Israel's history are troubled by a story in which God tells the Israelites to totally destroy the Canaanites and drive them out of their land.

In all of this, the student needs to be reminded of the nature of biblical story telling. As we mentioned in Unit I, the stories of the Old Testament went through a long and complex process before they were written down. There were many traditions and stories circulating about how Israel inhabited the land. We also need to keep in mind that the Old Testament is written from Israel's perspective. The stories are concerned to show God's guidance in everything Israel did.

One also needs to be aware of principles of biblical interpretation which focus on the entire biblical message of God's redemptive love for all of humanity. The dynamic of scripture is such that the story is not always neat and tidy, because life is not that way, and the Bible is a divine and human book. There are what one scholar has called those "texts of terror" that are part of our Bible. We must read them in their larger cultural and historical contexts. We must wrestle with them as Jacob wrestled with the angel and know that in the wrestling our perspective may be changed, or at the very least we will have prevailed in some understanding in how to approach these texts as scripture.

FOR SECTIONS A and B

READ:

Deuteronomy chapters 7 through 10; Numbers chapters 13 and 14; Joshua chapters 1 through 8; Judges chapter 1:1 through 2:5

MDB: "Land"; "Conquest of Canaan"; "Canaan"; "Canaan, Inhabitants of"; "Land"

NOAB: 411-412 "The Israelite Settlement"

ASSIGNMENT #10:

Answer study questions on the "Israelite conquest of Canaan" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION C.1 and 2

READ:

Judges chapter 2:6 through 21:25; the book of Ruth

MDB: "Judges, Book of"; "Tribes"; "Amphictyony/Confederacy"; "Ruth, Book of"

ASSIGNMENT #11:

Answer "reading questions on Judges and Ruth" in appendix.

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UNIT IV: BECOMING A GREAT NATION IN THE LAND

During the first 200 years that Israel lived in the land of Canaan they had a tribal existence, being led by different judges that God would raise up to deliver them out of trouble. Before too long the Israelites wanted to be like the other nations and have a king. The prophet and judge, Samuel, was against this. He and others felt having a king was a violation of the covenant. In the ancient Near Eastern world kings were considered gods, so for Israel to have a king meant breaking the first commandment. The way the Israelites rationalized getting a king was to say that their king was God's son, God's representative on earth. It was this type of thinking that led to the expectation of a messiah.

Israel became a great nation with wealth, military strength, and influence under the rules of king David and Solomon. It was during this time that Israel's poetic and wisdom traditions flourished. At the end of Solomon's reign, the kingdom broke out into civil war and split in half. The northern part of the kingdom continued to be called Israel and the southern part of the kingdom was called Judah. Each kingdom would have its own king and eventually each would fall to different enemies.

FOR SECTION A

READ:

1 Samuel chapter 1:1 through 13:15

MDB: "Samuel, Books of First and Second"; "Hannah"; "Samuel"; "Saul"; "Philistines"; "Ark"; "Kingship"

NOAB: 412-413 "The United Monarchy"

ASSIGNMENT #12:

Answer "reading questions 1 Samuel 1-13" in appendix.

FOR SECTION B

READ:

1 Samuel chapters 17 through 20; 2 Samuel chapters 1 through 18

MDB: "David"; "Succession Narrative"; "Bathsheba"; "Nathan"; "Jonathan"

ASSIGNMENT #13:

Answer "reading questions on David: 1 Samuel 17-20 and 2 Samuel 1-18" in appendix.

FOR SECTIONS C and D

READ:

1 Kings chapters 3 through 12; Proverbs chapters 1 through 9; Ecclesiastes 3

MDB: "Solomon"; "Jeroboam I"; "Rehoboam"; "United Monarchy"; "Proverbs, Book of"; "Proverb"; "Ecclesiastes, Book of"; "Wisdom in the Old Testament"; "Wisdom Literature"

ASSIGNMENT #14:

Answer "reading questions on Proverbs 1-9" in appendix.

FOR SECTION E

READ:

The Song of Solomon

MDB: "poetry"; "Song of Songs"

NOAB" "Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry," pp.392-397

ASSIGNMENT #15:

Write a 2-3 reaction paper on the article in the appendix by Dr. Mona West entitled, "The Song of Songs as Scripture for UFMCC."

UNIT V: LOSING THE LAND

After the United Monarchy split at the end of the reign of Solomon, the two kingdoms existed side-by-side for two hundred years. During this time surrounding empires and shifting political and economic situations challenged each kingdom to live in the land according to the covenant and the stipulations required by God in Deuteronomy. As in times past, God raised up persons who were spiritual leaders for the kingdoms of Israel and Judah in their time of trouble. These persons were called prophets. They were not merely predictors of the future; more importantly they had a word of God to speak to the present religious, political and economic situation.

The northern kingdom did not heed the words of its prophets and Assyria destroyed Israel in 722 B.C. Likewise, the southern kingdom of Judah did not heed the words of its prophets and it fell to the Babylonians in 587 B.C. With the Babylonian exile, Israel's history comes full circle: they lose the land promised to their ancestors in Genesis.

The Babylonian exile and loss of the land sent Israel and Judah into a theological crisis. They questioned the nature of God's power and promises. They questioned the nature of evil and suffering. They hoped for a new age and a messiah that would make all the world a "promised land."

FOR SECTION A

READ:

Deuteronomy chapter 16:18 through 18:22

MDB: "Prophet"; "Prophetess"; "Prophecy"

NOAB: 862-865 OT "The Prophetical Books"

ASSIGNMENT #16:

Answer "beginning questions on prophecy" from the appendix.

FOR SECTION B.1

READ:

The book of Amos

MDB: "Amos"; "Amos, Book of"; "Israel"; "Uzziah"; "Jeroboam II"; "Assyria"

ASSIGNMENT #17:

Answer "reading questions on the book of Amos" from the appendix.

FOR SECTION B.2

READ:

Isaiah chapters 1 through 12; 2 Kings chapters 16 through 18

MDB: "Isaiah"; "Isaiah, Book of"; "Ahaz"; "Immanuel"; "Messianism"; "Holiness in the Old Testament"

ASSIGNMENT #18:

Answer "reading questions for Isaiah 1-12" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION C

READ:

Jeremiah chapters 1 through 7; 20 through 22; 29 through 31

MDB: "Jeremiah"; "Jeremiah, Book of"; "Jehoiakim"; "Josiah"; "Judah, Kingdom of"; "Exile"; "Covenant"; "Babylon"

ASSIGNMENT #19:

Write a 3-5 page character sketch of Jeremiah the man and the prophet. See guidelines in the appendix.

UNIT VI: INHABITING THE LAND AGAIN

The Babylonian exile is not the final word of the Old Testament. After 40 years in exile, the Persians defeat the Babylonians and allow the Israelites to return to the land. However, it is not their land independently. They are allowed to live there under Persian rule. This will be the way the Israelites occupy the land until a brief period of independence in 164 B.C.

Returning to the land and restoring homes, cities, and the temple was not such an easy task. There had been a whole generation born in exile who knew Babylon as their home and did not want to "return." There had been some who were left behind in the land who did not want to welcome those who returned. The glorious prophecies of hope and restoration from Isaiah were not immediate and the people lacked motivation to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the temple.

Under the leadership and encouragement of people like the prophet Haggai, Ezra the scribe and Nehemiah the governor, the people finished rebuilding the city walls and the temple. It wasn't long, however, before the people slipped back into their old habits of hollow worship practices and economic injustice. The prophet Malachi pointed out these injustices and attempted to lead the people back to Yahweh. His words formulate the closing book of the Old Testament.

FOR SECTIONS A and B

READ:

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah, Haggai and Malachi

MDB: "Cyrus"; "Persia"; "Ezra"; "Ezra, book of"; "Nehemiah"; "Nehemiah, book of"; "Haggai"; "Haggai, book of"; "Malachi"; "Malachi, book of"

ASSIGNMENT #20:

Write a 3-5 page paper in response to the following questions: What were the specific theological, social, religious, and political challenges of the "restoration"? How were these challenges met in the ministries of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Malachi?

**Study Questions: The Geography and
Archeology of the Old Testament World**
(Assignment #2)

1. List the modern day countries that make up the Fertile Crescent.
2. What does the word "Mesopotamia" literally mean? What is its relationship to the Fertile Crescent? What is its importance to biblical study?
3. Name and describe three features of the geography of Palestine which are significant for understanding the history of that land and why people live there.
4. Name and briefly describe 4 types of archeological work.
5. Name and describe 3 dating methods used in archeology.
6. Define "New Archeology."

READING QUESTIONS FOR GENESIS 1 AND 2

(Assignment #3)

READ GENESIS 1:1-2:4a

1. What is the state of the world at the very beginning of the creative process? If you were to draw a picture of verses 1 and 2 what would it look like?
2. Make a list of what is created on each of the first six days. Look at your list of each day's creation. Can you see any logic to the order? The first day concerns light and darkness; so does the fourth day. In what ways might the second and fifth days also be similar to each other? The third and sixth days?
3. Certain phrases are repeated for almost every day and every creative act. What are they?
4. Make a list of the verbs that describe what God does. Consider the verbs describing God's actions. What sense of the personality or character of God do you get from these words and other details? What seems to be God's relation to the world and its creatures?
5. What does it mean to be created in the image of God in this story?
6. What would you say is the main point of this story of creation?

READ GENESIS 2:4b-2:25

1. What is the state of the earth at the beginning of this narrative and how does it differ from the state of things when creation begins in 1:1?
2. According to this part of Genesis, what is the order of the creation of the world? How does the order of creation in this story differ from the first story?
3. What new verbs, not used in part one, describe God's actions in part two? Make a list of the new ones. Look at your list. What new sense of the personality or character of God do you get from these words and other details of the story? How does God seem to relate to the world and its creatures in this story?
4. How does the creation of man and woman in chapter 2 differ from the creation of male and female in chapter 1? How would you explain this difference?
5. What would you say is the main point of this story of creation?

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

In your opinion, are these two different stories of creation? If so, how do you reconcile their differences? If not, how do you explain their differences?

What claims do each of these stories make about humankind's relationship to the created order?

How have these stories been used against the gay and lesbian community?

How might we reclaim them for our community?

CLAIMING THE SONG FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Like the Song of Songs transcends the dichotomy of heterosexism and celebrates a way of life to celebrate love in all its forms, in all its variety.

1. There is reference to the small and moistness of the woman which culminates in the verse 4:12-13.
2. There is a reference to the woman, and the sexual response cycle are studied in 4:12-13.
3. And of course, the love poetry would be complete without the missionary position 2:6-7.

The Song is word of God for us because it presents us with a variety of sexual behavior that is celebrated as good. It is not weighed without shame, guilt, or the fear of judgment.

Finally, the Song functions as scripture because it leads us to delight in our bodies and relate to all of creation. Throughout the Song the lovers describe one another with images taken from every region of the body. Body parts are compared to precious jewels, small animals, and other things. This delight in the physical body is a far cry from the pharisees who were so strict in Genesis 2 when they knew they were naked before God and each other.

With their physical bodies not only do the lovers relate to each other, they also experience creation as they move love in the open countryside. In the spring (2:10-13), search for one another among fairs and fairs, and seek to be a part of the world to sustain them in between their loving.

standards she is not to be out in the middle of the night, alone, taking the initiative, seeking her beloved. (I can't help but wonder about the parallels in our own society concerning the safety of unaccompanied women in the city streets at night.)

These situations speak to our community as we struggle to overcome the same barriers which would keep us from expressing our love to one another.

The lovers' words to us in 8:6-7 ring true to our experience--they come to us as word of God: "love is as strong as death, passion fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If one offered for love all the wealth of their house it would be utterly scorned."

CLAIMING THE SONG FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Because the Song of Songs transcends the strictures of heterosexism and sexism, a way is made to celebrate love in all its forms, in all its variety:

1. There is reference to the smell and moistness of the woman which culminates in oral sex: 4:13-5:1.
2. Manual stimulation, penetration, and the sexual response cycle are alluded to in 5:2-6.
3. And of course, no erotic love poetry would be complete without the missionary position: 2:6;8:3.

The Song is word of God for us because it presents us with a variety of sexual behavior that is celebrated as good. It is sex enjoyed without shame, guilt, or the fear of disease.

Finally, the Song functions as scripture because it leads us to delight in our bodies and relate to all of creation. Throughout the Song the lovers describe one another with images taken from everyday life in Palestine. Body parts are compared to precious jewels, ornate architectural structures, luscious fruit. This delight in the physical body is a far cry from the shame the man and woman felt in Genesis 3 when they knew they were naked before God and each other.

With their physical bodies not only do the lovers experience each other, they also experience creation as they make love in the open countryside, celebrate spring (2:10-13), search for one another among flora and fauna, and eat nuts and fruits to sustain them in between their lovemaking.

James Nelson has said that the reality of our existence as sexual and spiritual beings in this world is that we live between two gardens: the Garden of Eden with the results of human disobedience being manifested in alienation, shame, and sexual dualism; the Erotic Garden of the Song which provides us with a vision of mutuality and a freedom of sexual expression without fear and guilt.

The good news is that God has come to be with us in the flesh. God is with us in our flesh. In our sensuous, lusty, all-shapes- and-sizes, desirable, flesh.

"Jesus as Christ is our faith community's paradigm, our living symbol of God's ongoing embodiment--and of the possibility of our being, in some measure, body-words of the divine love." (Nelson)

As followers of the Christ, we flesh out the word of God. Straining and groaning with all of creation toward that vision of the Erotic Garden.

BEGINNING QUESTIONS ON PROPHECY

(Assignment #16)

1. What do you think of when you hear the word prophet or prophecy?
2. How do prophets look and act? What is "typical" prophetic behavior?
3. What does it mean to call someone a prophet? How does a person become a prophet?
4. What are some ways we hear or see the word "prophecy" used today?
5. How would you describe the Old Testament prophets? How many can you name? (name them below)
6. Are there prophets today like there were in biblical times? If so, who are they? Do you know any prophets?

READING QUESTIONS ON THE BOOK OF AMOS

(Assignment #17)

1. What was the economic, religious, and political climate in Israel during the time of Amos' prophetic ministry?
2. Describe Amos as a person. How did Amos become a prophet? How did Amos perceive himself as a prophet? (Support your answers from the biblical text. Give chapter and verse numbers.)
3. To whom is Amos' message addressed?
4. What were the reasons for God's judgment upon Israel and what was God going to do to Israel. (Cite specific examples from the text.)
5. What techniques does Amos use to get his message across? Note different kinds of literary forms, images, theological concepts--cite specific examples from the text.
6. How does Amos express the power of Yahweh?
7. How does Amos talk about Yahweh's relationship with Israel?
8. Much of the material in Amos (chapters 7-10) reflects the Syrian-Aramaean crisis of 720-722 B.C. Assyria was marching southward along the Mediterranean coast. Syria and Israel formed a coalition to defend themselves but they were shut out and had to replace King Ahaz by an Assyrian puppet king. Amos, Zechariah and Hosea did not know what to do. What advice did Isaiah give him, according to 7:1-6?
9. The Jeremiah passage, 7:10-17, also reflects the Syrian-Aramaean crisis. How did he you think the child must behave before he knows the difference between right and wrong (v. 10)? Before this happens, what will be the result? What should he do?
10. Several interpretations of Jeremiah (7:10-17) are possible. (1) Isaiah referred to the boy's children as a way of mocking him. (2) Isaiah was talking of the next king, Hezekiah (7:15-16). (3) Isaiah was predicting the fall of Jerusalem some seven years later (7:26-28). Which interpretation or interpretations do you agree with? Why?

**READING QUESTIONS FOR
ISAIAH CHAPTERS 1-12**
(Assignment #18)

1. Isaiah 6 describes Isaiah's call to be a prophet. Where did this occur? Do you think there is any connection between "King" in verse 1 and "King" in verse 5? How did Isaiah react to his sense of the holiness of Yahweh? What happened? Do you think the ideas in verses 9-10 indicate the purpose or the consequences of Isaiah's ministry?
2. Isaiah 1-5 contains sayings from Isaiah's early ministry, in the years after 742 B.C. What does Isaiah think of the people of his time, according to 1:2-6; 2:6-22? Why?
3. What does Isaiah think of the people's worship, according to 1:11-17? Why?
4. What criticisms of conditions in society does Isaiah make in 1:21-23; 3:13-15; 5:8-12, 22-23?
5. What does Isaiah want people to do, according to 1:16-17?
6. Does Isaiah think the people can be forgiven, according to 1:18-20? Does he indicate whether he thinks this is probable?
7. What titles for God does Isaiah use in 1:4, 9, 24; 2:12; 3:1, 15; 5:9, 16, 19, 24?
8. In the "Song of the Vineyard," 5:1-7, Isaiah apparently takes a popular song of the day and develops it into a parable about Yahweh and Israel. What did Yahweh expect from Israel? What did he find? Note the play on words in verse 7: justice (mishpat), bloodshed (mispach); righteousness (tsedaqah), cry for help (tse'aqah).
9. Much of the material in Isaiah chapters 7-10 reflects the Syro-Israelite crisis of 733-732 B.C. Assyria was expanding southward along the Mediterranean coast; Syria and Israel formed a coalition to defend themselves; they also attacked Judah to replace king Ahaz by an anti-Assyrian puppet king. Ahaz, weak and vacillating, did not know what to do. What advice did Isaiah give him, according to 7:1-9?
10. The Immanuel passage, 7:10-17, also reflects the Syro-Israelite crisis. How old do you think the child must be before he knows the difference between right and wrong (v. 16)? Before this happens, what relief will come to Judah? What disaster will follow?
11. Several interpretations of Immanuel ("God is with us") are possible: (1) Isaiah referred to the boy's childhood as a way of measuring time; (2) Isaiah was thinking of the next king, Hezekiah (715-687 B.C.); (3) Isaiah was predicting the birth of Jesus some seven centuries later (Matt. 1:23). Which interpretation or interpretations do you agree with? Why?

12. The account in 2 Kings 16 tells how Ahaz reacted at the time of the Syro-Israelite crisis. Did he take Isaiah's advice? What did he do?
13. What are some of the characteristics of the ideal king, according to the poems in 9:2-7; 11:1-9? Is it possible that Isaiah originally composed these poems in honor of Hezekiah?
14. How would you summarize the important ideas that Isaiah expressed in his ministry?

Guidelines for character sketch of Jeremiah

(Assignment #19)

We know probably know more about the life and inner struggles of Jeremiah than any other prophet. His prophetic career spanned the most turbulent years of Israel's history. Jeremiah was a prophet who spoke a word of judgment which led to the Babylonian exile. He was also a prophet who spoke a word of hope and encouragement to the people once they were in exile.

Based on your reading about Jeremiah from the Bible and the Mercer Dictionary (see student syllabus), write a 3-5 page character sketch of Jeremiah, the man and the prophet. Include information about the following:

1. Jeremiah's call to ministry;
2. His doubts and struggles concerning his ministry;
3. His relationship to his people;
4. The basic points of his messages of judgment, including images he uses to get his points across;
5. Basic points of his message of hope and encouragement, including images he uses to get his points across.

READING QUESTIONS ON PROVERBS 1-9

(Assignment #14)

1. What is a proverb? List all the modern day proverbs that you know or have heard. (e.g. "An apple a day keeps the doctor away.")
3. What is the purpose of a proverb? What is its function in life? Why do they exist?
4. Read through Proverbs chapters 1-9 and mark the occurrences of the word "wisdom." Write out a definition of wisdom that would account for all the references you marked.
5. Compile a list of terms/phrases used in parallel with wisdom (e.g., in Proverbs 2:10 the term "wisdom" is in parallel with "knowledge"). How does this list add to your definition of wisdom?
6. Who is teaching whom in these chapters? What social context(s) do these proverbs imply?
7. List some key terms/themes of the teaching of the proverbs found in chapters 1-9. Notice the references to the term "life" (2:19; 3:13-18; 5:6; 8:35). What are these passages saying about life? What are the characteristics of life, according to the book of Proverbs?
8. Read Proverbs 8:1-36. Who is speaking in this section?
9. Describe Wisdom's role at creation in Proverbs 8:22-31.
10. How would you explain the images of Woman Wisdom and Woman Folly? Why are they female? How might this imagery relate to the social setting of wisdom teaching in the Proverbs 1-9?
11. In passages such as 3:13-18 and 4:5 & 7, the student is told to search for wisdom, or to get wisdom. How do you interpret the initiative of Woman Wisdom in chapter 8 in light of these passages?
12. Read John 1:1-18 in the New Testament. What are the similarities/differences between Jesus as the Word in John 1 and Woman Wisdom in Proverbs 8?

THE SONG OF SONGS AS SCRIPTURE FOR UFMCC

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(Assignment #15)

INTRODUCTION

When was the last time you heard a sermon on the Song of Solomon? You're not really going to read one now. What I want to share with you are my reflections on the Song and the ways I think it functions as scripture for our community.

Over the years folks haven't quite known what to do with the Song. It almost didn't make it into the Bible. God is not mentioned at all in the book, nor is any event of salvation history. Solomon isn't even the book's author. The book was associated with Solomon because he was known for his poetic compositions and his love of women. In reality, the primary speaker in the poems is a woman. It is very likely that the author may have been female.

The book is a collection of erotic love poems, pure and simple. (Read 1:2-3; 1:13-14; 3:1; 7:6-9.)

WHAT MAKES THIS SCRIPTURE?

Well, religious leaders claimed that the book should be read as an allegory. For Jews it is supposed to be an allegory of Yahweh's relationship with Israel; for Christians the book is an allegory of Christ's relationship to the church.

Maybe people haven't known what to do with the book because they haven't known what to do with human sexuality. The graphic, erotic, celebratory, nature of the poetry makes people uncomfortable. It's easier to talk about Christ and the church than lips and breasts and torsos and sexual smells.

Currently, theologians are reaffirming the book's emphasis on the erotic. In an age when we as human beings feel alienated from the world, God, each other, and our own bodies, the Song of Songs can help us celebrate our sexual selves and rejoice in our physical bodies.

That is exactly why I think this book has much to say to us in UFMCC. As "sexual minorities" and the sexually disenfranchised in a heterosexist patriarchal culture, this book speaks powerfully to us as the word of God.

Feminists have taught us that we should be suspicious of any thing/any text that does violence to our essential selves as persons created in God's image. That is why we

spend so much time with those few passages in the Bible that mention homosexuality. Conversely, shouldn't we welcome with open arms those texts that speak to our essential selves as persons who have been created in the image of God as sexual beings?

Now you may ask, "How can the Song of Songs be scripture for UFMCC when it is clearly heterosexual love poetry?" I think it speaks to us as the word of God precisely because of its heterosexual context. As heterosexual love poetry, it transcends the strictures of patriarchal heterosexism. Love and sex are celebrated as ends in themselves--not as a means to marriage or procreation. Nowhere in the book are we told that the lovers are married, nor do they have children.

Nowhere in the book is one lover dominant over the other. The sin of sexism resulting from the fall in Genesis 3 is absent in the Song. The woman is equal partner with the man--seeking him out, beckoning him, describing his body, taking the initiative in lovemaking. The woman and the man are presented as mutual partners in relationship.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO LOVE

The poetry of the Song indicates that the lovers did not have an easy time of overcoming barriers to their love.

1. They had to struggle against barriers of race and class: 1:5-6. The woman's self-affirmation in 1:5-6 is the first indication that not all is well with the love expressed in the Song. The identity of the woman is uncertain. She is different from the daughters of Jerusalem in two ways. Her skin is dark as a result of working in the fields, which may indicate her lower socioeconomic status. (Her darkness implies the fairer skin of the daughters of Jerusalem who stayed indoors.) There is also the possibility that her skin color may denote a different ethnic background than the Jerusalem daughters. The claims she makes about herself are not apologetic, but boastful: "I am black and beautiful."
2. Verse 6 of chapter one indicates that the lovers had to overcome the barriers of family. Here and in 8:8-9 we are told that the woman's brothers try to keep her bound by patriarchal attitudes that refuse to recognize a woman as free agent of her own sexuality. In 8:10 the woman responds by claiming the goodness of her own sexuality which overcomes these barriers: "I was a wall, and my breasts were like towers; then I was in his eyes as one who brings peace."
3. The lovers also had to overcome societal norms. In 3:1-4 the woman puts herself at considerable risk seeking the beloved in the city streets during the middle of the night. She searches for him again in 5:2-7 but this time the sentinels of the city beat her when they find her. By patriarchal society's

standards she is not to be out in the middle of the night, alone, taking the initiative, seeking her beloved. (I can't help but wonder about the parallels in our own society concerning the safety of unaccompanied women in the city streets at night.)

These situations speak to our community as we struggle to overcome the same barriers which would keep us from expressing our love to one another.

The lovers' words to us in 8:6-7 ring true to our experience--they come to us as word of God: "love is as strong as death, passion fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If one offered for love all the wealth of their house it would be utterly scorned."

CLAIMING THE SONG FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Because the Song of Songs transcends the strictures of heterosexism and sexism, a way is made to celebrate love in all its forms, in all its variety:

1. There is reference to the smell and moistness of the woman which culminates in oral sex: 4:13-5:1.
2. Manual stimulation, penetration, and the sexual response cycle are alluded to in 5:2-6.
3. And of course, no erotic love poetry would be complete without the missionary position: 2:6;8:3.

The Song is word of God for us because it presents us with a variety of sexual behavior that is celebrated as good. It is sex enjoyed without shame, guilt, or the fear of disease.

Finally, the Song functions as scripture because it leads us to delight in our bodies and relate to all of creation. Throughout the Song the lovers describe one another with images taken from everyday life in Palestine. Body parts are compared to precious jewels, ornate architectural structures, luscious fruit. This delight in the physical body is a far cry from the shame the man and woman felt in Genesis 3 when they knew they were naked before God and each other.

With their physical bodies not only do the lovers experience each other, they also experience creation as they make love in the open countryside, celebrate spring (2:10-13), search for one another among flora and fauna, and eat nuts and fruits to sustain them in between their lovemaking.

James Nelson has said that the reality of our existence as sexual and spiritual beings in this world is that we live between two gardens: the Garden of Eden with the results of human disobedience being manifested in alienation, shame, and sexual dualism; the Erotic Garden of the Song which provides us with a vision of mutuality and a freedom of sexual expression without fear and guilt.

The good news is that God has come to be with us in the flesh. God is with us in our flesh. In our sensuous, lusty, all-shapes- and-sizes, desirable, flesh.

"Jesus as Christ is our faith community's paradigm, our living symbol of God's ongoing embodiment--and of the possibility of our being, in some measure, body-words of the divine love." (Nelson)

As followers of the Christ, we flesh out the word of God. Straining and groaning with all of creation toward that vision of the Erotic Garden.

BEGINNING QUESTIONS ON PROPHECY

(Assignment #16)

1. What do you think of when you hear the word prophet or prophecy?
2. How do prophets look and act? What is "typical" prophetic behavior?
3. What does it mean to call someone a prophet? How does a person become a prophet?
4. What are some ways we hear or see the word "prophecy" used today?
5. How would you describe the Old Testament prophets? How many can you name? (name them below)
6. Are there prophets today like there were in biblical times? If so, who are they? Do you know any prophets?

READING QUESTIONS ON THE BOOK OF AMOS

(Assignment #17)

1. What was the economic, religious, and political climate in Israel during the time of Amos' prophetic ministry?
2. Describe Amos as a person. How did Amos become a prophet? How did Amos perceive himself as a prophet? (Support your answers from the biblical text. Give chapter and verse numbers.)
3. To whom is Amos' message addressed?
4. What were the reasons for God's judgment upon Israel and what was God going to do to Israel. (Cite specific examples from the text.)
5. What techniques does Amos use to get his message across? Note different kinds of literary forms, images, theological concepts--cite specific examples from the text.
6. How does Amos express the power of Yahweh?
7. How does Amos talk about Yahweh's relationship with Israel?

**READING QUESTIONS FOR
ISAIAH CHAPTERS 1-12**
(Assignment #18)

1. Isaiah 6 describes Isaiah's call to be a prophet. Where did this occur? Do you think there is any connection between "King" in verse 1 and "King" in verse 5? How did Isaiah react to his sense of the holiness of Yahweh? What happened? Do you think the ideas in verses 9-10 indicate the purpose or the consequences of Isaiah's ministry?
2. Isaiah 1-5 contains sayings from Isaiah's early ministry, in the years after 742 B.C. What does Isaiah think of the people of his time, according to 1:2-6; 2:6-22? Why?
3. What does Isaiah think of the people's worship, according to 1:11-17? Why?
4. What criticisms of conditions in society does Isaiah make in 1:21-23; 3:13-15; 5:8-12, 22-23?
5. What does Isaiah want people to do, according to 1:16-17?
6. Does Isaiah think the people can be forgiven, according to 1:18-20? Does he indicate whether he thinks this is probable?
7. What titles for God does Isaiah use in 1:4, 9, 24; 2:12; 3:1, 15; 5:9, 16, 19, 24?
8. In the "Song of the Vineyard," 5:1-7, Isaiah apparently takes a popular song of the day and develops it into a parable about Yahweh and Israel. What did Yahweh expect from Israel? What did he find? Note the play on words in verse 7: justice (mishpat), bloodshed (mispach); righteousness (tsedaqah), cry for help (tse'aqah).
9. Much of the material in Isaiah chapters 7-10 reflects the Syro-Israelite crisis of 733-732 B.C. Assyria was expanding southward along the Mediterranean coast; Syria and Israel formed a coalition to defend themselves; they also attacked Judah to replace king Ahaz by an anti-Assyrian puppet king. Ahaz, weak and vacillating, did not know what to do. What advice did Isaiah give him, according to 7:1-9?
10. The Immanuel passage, 7:10-17, also reflects the Syro-Israelite crisis. How old do you think the child must be before he knows the difference between right and wrong (v. 16)? Before this happens, what relief will come to Judah? What disaster will follow?
11. Several interpretations of Immanuel ("God is with us") are possible: (1) Isaiah referred to the boy's childhood as a way of measuring time; (2) Isaiah was thinking of the next king, Hezekiah (715-687 B.C.); (3) Isaiah was predicting the birth of Jesus some seven centuries later (Matt. 1:23). Which interpretation or interpretations do you agree with? Why?

12. The account in 2 Kings 16 tells how Ahaz reacted at the time of the Syro-Israelite crisis. Did he take Isaiah's advice? What did he do?
13. What are some of the characteristics of the ideal king, according to the poems in 9:2-7; 11:1-9? Is it possible that Isaiah originally composed these poems in honor of Hezekiah?
14. How would you summarize the important ideas that Isaiah expressed in his ministry?

Based on your reading about Jeremiah from the Bible and the Mercer Dictionary that student reading, write a 1-2 page character sketch of Jeremiah, including the prophet's important messages about the following:

1. Jeremiah's call to ministry.
2. His doubts and struggles concerning his ministry.
3. His relationship to his people.
4. The basic points of his messages to his people, including images he used to get his points across.
5. Basic points of his message of hope and encouragement, including images he used to get his points across.

Guidelines for character sketch of Jeremiah

(Assignment #19)

We know probably know more about the life and inner struggles of Jeremiah than any other prophet. His prophetic career spanned the most turbulent years of Israel's history. Jeremiah was a prophet who spoke a word of judgment which led to the Babylonian exile. He was also a prophet who spoke a word of hope and encouragement to the people once they were in exile.

Based on your reading about Jeremiah from the Bible and the Mercer Dictionary (see student syllabus), write a 3-5 page character sketch of Jeremiah, the man and the prophet. Include information about the following:

1. Jeremiah's call to ministry;
2. His doubts and struggles concerning his ministry;
3. His relationship to his people;
4. The basic points of his messages of judgment, including images he uses to get his points across;
5. Basic points of his message of hope and encouragement, including images he uses to get his points across.

THE SONG OF SONGS AS SCRIPTURE FOR UFMCC

Copyright 1993 Dr. Mona West
(Assignment #15)

INTRODUCTION

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Samaritan Correspondence Course

Textbook Information

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE, PART 1

The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha, Oxford University Press.

The Mercer Dictionary of the Bible, Mercer University Press.

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE, PART 2

The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha, Oxford University Press.

The Mercer Dictionary of the Bible, Mercer University Press.

The Moral Teachings of Paul: Selected Issues, by Victor Paul Furnish, Abingdon Press.

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY, PART 1

The Story of Christianity, Vol.1, by Justo Gonzalez, Harper San Francisco.

Her Story, by Barbara MacHaffie, Fortress Press.

Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality, by John Boswell, University of Chicago Press.

Readings in Christian Thought, 2nd ed., edited by Hugh T. Kerr, Abingdon Press.

Readings in Her Story, edited by Barbara MacHaffie, Fortress Press.

HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY, PART 2

The Story of Christianity, Vol 2, by Justo Gonzalez, Harper San Francisco.

Her Story, by Barbara MacHaffie, Fortress Press.

Hidden From History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past, Martin Duberman, et.al., eds., Penguin Press.

Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of Afro-American People, 2nd ed., by Gayraud S. Wilmore, Orbis Press.

Readings in Christian Thought, 2nd ed., edited by Hugh T. Kerr, Abingdon Press.

Readings in Her Story, edited by Barbara MacHaffie, Fortress Press.

POLITY

Don't Be Afraid Anymore: The Story of Reverend Troy Perry and the Metropolitan Community Churches, by Troy Perry with Thomas Swicegood, St. Martins Press.

1993 UFMCC By-Laws, available from UFMCC in Los Angeles (213-464-5100)

Student Reader, available from Cathedral of Hope Bookstore.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Foundations for the Teaching Church: Christian Faith, Person Nurture, and Church Life, Grant W. Hanson, Judson Press.

To Know as We Are Known: A Spirituality of Education, Parker J. Palmer, Harper and Row.

Teaching Scripture from an African-American Perspective, Joseph V. Crockett, Discipleship Resources.

How to Mobilize Church Volunteers, Marlene Wilson, Augsburg.

Marching to Different Drummers, by Pat Burke Guild and Stephen Garger, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION/GROWTH

Antagonists in the Church: How to Identify and Deal with Destructive Conflict, by Kenneth C. Haugk, Augsburg.

44 Steps Up Off the Plateau, by Layle E. Schaller, Abingdon.

Student Workbook, available from Cathedral of Hope Bookstore.

PASTORAL CARE

The Skilled Pastor: Counseling as the Practice of Theology, Charles W. Taylor, Fortress Press.

Student Reader, available from Cathedral of Hope Bookstore.

OUR STORY TOO

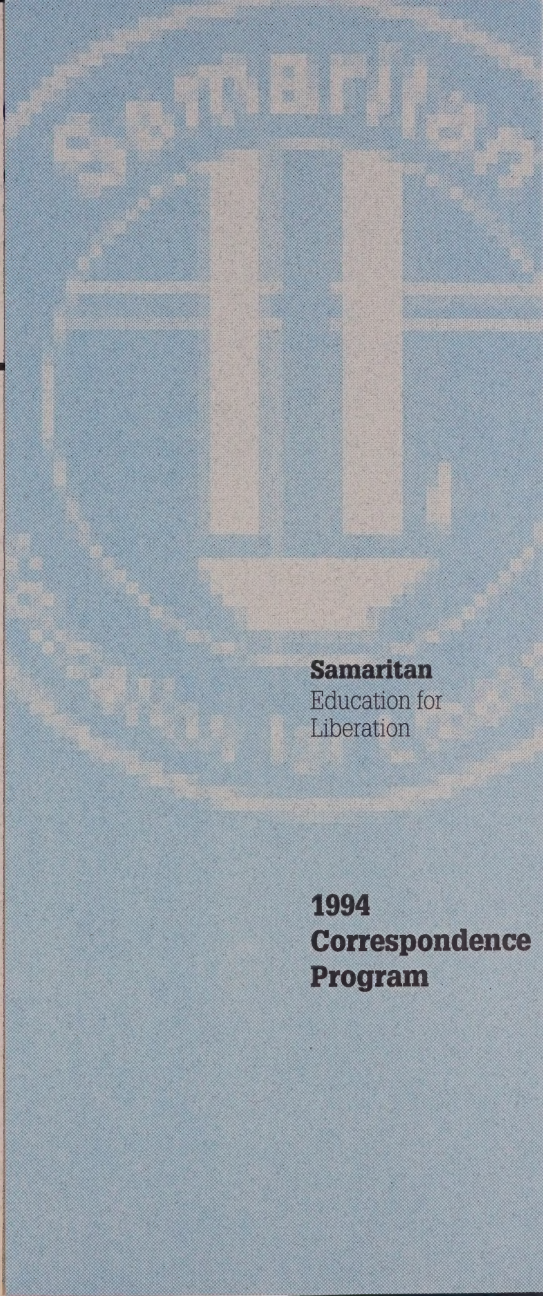
Her Story: Women in Christian Tradition, by Barbara J. MacHaffie.

Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality, by John Boswell.

Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past, edited by Martin Duberman, Martha Vecinus and George Chauncey, Jr.

Black Religion and Black Radicalism: An Interpretation of the Religious History of Afro-American People, 2nd edition, by Gayraud S. Wilmore.

All books are available from Cathedral of Hope Bookstore. Call 214-351-1901 and ask for Sue Schrader. Credit card and pre-paid orders only.



Samaritan
Education for
Liberation

1994
Correspondence
Program

What Is It?

The Samaritan Correspondence Program is an effort to make Samaritan courses available to persons who cannot enroll in classes offered on site in the District Partnership because of distance to course site or lack of course availability.

Samaritan correspondence courses contain the same material, utilize the same textbooks, and have the same objectives as courses taught in the classroom setting. However, there is no substitute for the additional quality of interactive learning that takes place when a student can be in regular contact with faculty and student peers in a classroom setting. Therefore, correspondence courses should not be viewed as a convenient way to achieve one's educational goals.

The student should make every effort to take Samaritan courses in a classroom setting, using correspondence as a secondary option. Students should also note that the Bachelor of Theology degree cannot be completed through correspondence alone, nor can the proficiencies required for UFMCC licensure be met entirely through correspondence.

Who Is It For?

Persons who are preparing for professional ministry in the UFMCC can complete some of the proficiencies for initial licensure through correspondence.

Persons who are completing the Bachelor of Theology degree from Samaritan can meet some of the requirements through correspondence.

Anyone may enroll in a Samaritan correspondence course. However, it is assumed that persons who will successfully complete these courses are those who have met the minimum requirements for admission into the Bachelor of Theology degree (60 hours of college level general education, i.e. math, science, English composition, history, etc.).

How Does It Work?

Students who enroll will be assigned to a correspondence faculty with particular training and expertise in the course for which the student has registered. That faculty member will guide the student in covering the content of the course, grade all assignments, and report a final grade to Samaritan. When a student enrolls in a correspondence course he or she is in a

contractual relationship with the faculty member and Samaritan.

Registration Procedures

1. Complete the Correspondence Course Enrollment Form, indicating which course you would like to enroll in.
2. Send check or money order for complete tuition and registration fee along with the Enrollment Form to Samaritan.
3. Once the Enrollment Form and payment have been received, you will receive verification of enrollment and will be assigned to a faculty member. At this time, you are enrolled in this course and are obligated to complete it by the date indicated on the Verification of Enrollment Form.

Policies

1. Students have **four months** (length of one trimester) to complete a correspondence course once their enrollment in the course has been verified. (Students are strongly advised to enroll in one course at a time.)
2. If the student fails to complete the course within the appropriate time frame, a grade of F will be recorded.
3. Students have up to one month to withdraw from a correspondence course and receive full refund of tuition (registration fee is non-refundable). Request for withdrawal and tuition refund must be made in writing to the Academic Dean of Samaritan.
4. Once the student has enrolled in a correspondence course they will be unable to transfer that course into a classroom setting.

Textbooks

Information on textbooks and course materials will be mailed to students with their Verification of Enrollment form.

correspondence

Samaritan Correspondence Course

Enrollment Form

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Province _____

Country, Zip Code/Postal Code _____

Phone _____

Place an X by the Course for which you are enrolling: (Note: Students are strongly advised to enroll in one course at a time.)

Group A Courses

Tuition*

Understanding the Bible, Part I	\$255.00
Understanding the Bible, Part II	255.00
History of Christianity, Part I	255.00
History of Christianity, Part II	255.00
UFMCC Polity	170.00

Group B Courses

Pastoral Care	\$255.00
Church Admin/Church Growth	255.00
Christian Education	170.00

Other Courses

Our Story Too	\$255.00
From Scripture to Sermon	170.00
Homosexuality and the Scriptures	170.00

* Based on \$85 per credit unit/hour.

Does not include registration fee and cost of textbooks and course materials.

Enclosed please find my check no. _____ for:

Registration Per Course (\$35.00): _____

Tuition (\$85.00 per credit hour): _____

Total Enclosed: _____

Please make all checks payable to Samaritan.

Mail to: Samaritan
Post Office Box 688
Lewisville, Texas 75067

As of January 1, 1995 tuition is \$90.00 per credit unit/hour.

<u>Credit</u>	<u>Tuition</u>
1	\$90.00
2	\$180.00
3	\$270.00

Samaritan Correspondence Courses

Course	Credit	Tuition*
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Group A

Available March 31, 1994

Understanding the Bible, Part I	3	\$ 255
Understanding the Bible, Part II	3	255
History of Christianity, Part I	3	255
History of Christianity, Part II	3	255
UFMCC Polity	2	170

Group B

Available May 31, 1994

Pastoral Care	3	\$ 255
Church Administration/Church Growth	3	255
Christian Education	2	170

Other

Available March 31, 1994

Our Story Too	3	\$ 255
From Scripture to Sermon	2	170
Homosexuality and the Scriptures	2	170

* Based on \$85 per credit unit/hour

Does not include cost of textbooks and course materials.

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Samaritan

Post Office Box 688 Lewisville, Texas 75067
214/221-7749

**STUDENT SYLLABUS FOR
UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE, PART I
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
Copyright 1994 Samaritan**

Introduction to the Student:

Understanding the Bible, Part I is a three credit course. In a normal classroom setting, students would meet with an instructor for a total of 36 hours, spend at least another 72 hours reading textbooks, then additional time on written assignments and preparation for exams.

It is important that you understand the correspondence course. Nothing more is required of correspondence students than what is required of students in a normal classroom. You must be highly motivated to read and accomplish the assignments. You will receive the added benefit of regular interaction with classmates or the instructor.

You will have four months (the length of a trimester) to complete a correspondence course. For this purpose, you must plan to study at least two hours daily and completing 20 assignments. The instructor will give you yourself, allowing about four or five days for each assignment. (Some assignments may take less time, some may take longer.)

At the end of each assignment, make a photocopy for your files and send the original to your faculty member. Do not wait to get the graded assignment back from the faculty before you start the next one. Your faculty member will be in regular contact with you by telephone. If at any point you do not understand an assignment, or you want to discuss a particular topic in more detail, you are welcome to contact your faculty directly.

All assignments must be completed and graded by your faculty member by the correspondence course deadline. There are no extensions for correspondence assignments. Faculty will send final grades to Samaritan and students will receive official notification of their grade from the Registrar. Students must earn a grade of 70% or better in order to credit for any Samaritan course.

Description of course:

This course covers the Old Testament of the Christian Bible. Areas of study include: Old Testament geography, history and culture; the growth and development of the Old Testament and the different types of literature found in the Old Testament and ways to read that literature; critical issues of biblical interpretation; attention is also given to issues and themes which emerge from a study of the Old Testament and ways in which these themes can be applied to contemporary situations.

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It is important students realize that an equal amount of time and attention should be given toward the completion of a correspondence course. If anything, more is required of correspondence students because they must work on their own and be highly motivated to read and accomplish the tasks set before them without the added benefit of regular interaction with classmates or the instructor.

Students have four months (the length of a trimester) to complete a correspondence course. For this particular course, you will be reading from two textbooks and completing 20 assignments. It is imperative that you pace yourself, allowing about four or five days for each assignment. (Some assignments may take less time, some may take longer.)

As you finish each assignment, make a photocopy for your files and send the original to your faculty member. Do not wait to get the graded assignment back from the faculty before you start the next one. Your faculty member will be in regular contact with you by telephone. If at any point you do not understand an assignment, or you want to discuss a particular topic in more detail, do not hesitate to contact your faculty directly.

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Description of course:

This course introduces the Old Testament of the Christian Bible. Areas of study include: Old Testament geography, history and culture; the growth and transmission of the Old Testament text; the different types of literature found in the Old Testament and ways to read that literature; critical issues of biblical interpretation. Attention is also given to ideas and themes which emerge from a study of the Old Testament and ways in which these themes can be applied to contemporary experience.

Course Objectives

1. The student will demonstrate a knowledge of the growth and transmission of the Old Testament text.
2. The student will demonstrate a knowledge of the structure of the literature of the Old Testament by identifying the types of literature represented and different approaches to the reading this literature.
3. The student will demonstrate an understanding of important theological concepts and themes which emerge from a study of the Old Testament. The student will be encouraged to relate these concepts and themes to human experience.
4. The student will demonstrate a knowledge of the geography and culture of the Old Testament world, as well as knowledge of the main periods and events in biblical history and their relationships to each other.
5. The student will demonstrate a knowledge of the critical issues surrounding the interpretation of biblical texts by marginalized groups.

Required textbooks:

The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha, Oxford University Press

The Mercer Dictionary of the Bible, Mercer University Press

All of the required texts are available from the bookstore at Cathedral of Hope MCC Dallas. To order, call 214-351-1901 and ask for Sue Schrader.

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE, PART I COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

After introductory and background matters, the outline of the course will roughly follow the plot of the biblical narrative as it is found in the Old Testament books Genesis through 2 Kings. At appropriate intervals, attention will be given to the prophetic tradition in Israel, as well as the wisdom and poetical works of the Old Testament. There will be 6 broad units to the course:

1. Introduction and background material
2. Creation of the world and creation of Israel as a people (Genesis-Numbers)
3. Israel's early years in the land of Canaan (Deuteronomy-Ruth)
4. Becoming a great nation in the land of Canaan (1 Samuel-1 Kings, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes)
5. Losing the land (1 Kings-2 Kings, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah)
6. Inhabiting the land again (Ezra-Nehemiah, Haggai, Malachi)

For each unit there will be general introductory remarks, a list of readings from the textbooks for each section of the unit, and a specific assignment for that section of the unit.

There are 20 assignments for this course. Thirteen of them include things like, listing specific information, identifying terms, and answering study questions. Together, these assignments are worth 50% of the course grade. There are also seven short papers. These papers are opportunities for you to respond to particular questions and issues in an essay format. Three of these papers are 3-5 pages in length and each are worth 10% of the course grade. The remaining four papers are 2-3 pages in length and each are worth 5% of the course grade.

For each assignment, be sure you follow the guidelines carefully and answer the questions clearly and completely. If the assignment has several questions to it, be sure you address all the questions. Well organized paragraphs, correct spelling and grammar are important elements in communicating to your faculty member. Remember that faculty cannot "read between the lines" nor can they "guess" what you are trying to say. Be as clear and specific as possible. If you have any question about an assignment, do not hesitate to call the faculty member assigned to you for this course.

CONTENT OUTLINE UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE, PART I

- I. General Introduction and Background
 - A. What is the Old Testament?

- B. How did we get it?
- C. Why study it?
- D. The geography and archeology of the Old Testament world

II. Creation of the World and Creation of Israel

- A. Stories of creation and uncreation
 - 1. Genesis 1 and 2
 - 2. Genesis 3 through 11
- B. The ancestors
 - 1. Promise as a literary theological device
 - 2. The socio-cultural background of the ancestors
- C. Slavery, Liberation, and Covenant
 - 1. Israel in Egypt
 - 2. Africa and Israel's beginnings
 - 3. Revelation of the divine name
 - 4. Moses, the plagues, and the crossing of the Red Sea
 - 5. Covenant, law, and cult in the Old Testament
 - 6. The holiness code
 - 7. Wilderness and the paradox of freedom

III. Israel in the Land of Canaan

- A. Land in the biblical tradition
- B. Conquest and settlement
- C. Learning to live in the land

IV. Becoming a Great Nation in the Land

- A. Samuel and Saul: the beginnings of the monarchy
- B. King David and his house
- C. Solomon and the split of the united monarchy
- D. Israel's wisdom traditions
- E. Israel's poetic traditions

V. Losing the Land

- A. The role of the prophet in Israel
- B. Classical prophecy
 - 1. Amos and the North
 - 2. Isaiah and the South
- C. Jeremiah, the exile, and the new covenant

VI. Inhabiting the Land Again

- A. Return and restoration
- B. Prophets of the restoration

How to use the New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha (NOAB)

Your NOAB has five sections which appear in the following order: (1) the Old Testament section (pages numbers will have OT next to them); (2) the section on the Apocrypha (books that Roman Catholics consider scripture, but Protestants do not, page numbers will have AP next to them); (3) the New Testament section (page numbers will have NT); (4) a section of general articles about the Bible (right after the New Testament, plain page numbers); (5) Bible maps (each map is numbered).

For each book of the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha there will be a brief introduction to that book, which contains important information about why the book was written, when it was written, and to whom. These introductions will also include the books' major themes. There will also be notations at the bottom of each page which explain the biblical book chapter-by-chapter.

The general articles in the back of the NOAB provide helpful information about how to study the Bible and the geography and history of the ancient Near Eastern world.

Students will be asked to read much of this material and utilize it in completing certain assignments.

How to use your Mercer Dictionary of the Bible. (MDB)

Your MDB works like any other dictionary: the entries are arranged alphabetically. Titles for articles listed in the "readings and assignments" section below are printed as the entries appear in the MDB. Each article contains a bibliography at the end as well as a list of related terms which are also included in the MDB.

Each article is written by a different person and their name appears as the last entry for that article. If you want to know who that person is and where they teach, look up their name in the front of the MDB under the "List of Contributors."

In the middle section of the MDB there are charts, maps, and photographs which contain important background information for biblical study.

READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

UNIT I: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In this introductory section of the course students will be exploring three questions: "What is the Old Testament?" "How did we get it?" "Why study it?" As you read the articles in the Oxford Bible and the Mercer Dictionary, keep these questions in mind.

The Old Testament is really a collection or library of many different kinds of books, written and collected together over a period of roughly 1000 years. Many "books" of the Old Testament were not written by one person, but were the product of many years of telling and retelling stories until finally someone wrote the story down. Because of this, you may find two or three versions of the same story in the Old Testament. Editors were responsible for weaving together the written material of the Old Testament into larger narrative blocks which extend from book to book and contain the bigger story of God's dealings with Israel in history.

Even after the books were written down, it took several hundred years of the Jewish people reading and using these writings in religious settings before the books were collected together and referred to as scripture. As a matter of fact, some books which had been circulating as "authoritative" writings did not make it into the Old Testament (see reading assignments on the Apocrypha).

It took several hundred more years for the Old Testament to be translated from its original Hebrew language into English. Since then, the Bible/Old Testament has had a tremendous impact upon western culture in the areas of art, literature, music, and law.

Many people study the Bible/Old Testament for a variety of reasons: as great literature; for historical and cultural information of the ancient world; as the Word of God.

In this unit you will also study the geography and archeology of the Old Testament world. It will be important to refer to the maps located in the middle section of the Mercer Dictionary as you read about areas such as the Fertile Crescent and Mesopotamia.

FOR SECTION A

READ:

MDB: "Old Testament"

NOAB: xxxi-xxxiii OT, "Introduction to the Old Testament"

FOR SECTION B

READ:

MDB: "Form/Gattung"; "Sources, Literary"; "Tradition in the Old Testament"; "Canon"; "Apocryphal Literature"

NOAB: xxi-xxii, "The Numbers and Sequence of the Books of the Bible"; iii-xii AP, "Introduction to the Apocryphal and Deuterocanonical Books"

FOR SECTION C

READ:

MDB: "Bible in America"; "Bible in Western Literature"; "Literature, Bible as"; "Bible, Authority of"

NOAB: 400-406 "English Versions of the Bible"

ASSIGNMENT #1:

Write a 3-5 page paper describing the Old Testament to someone who has never heard of it. Include answers to the following in your description: How many books are in the Old Testament? What types of literature are in the Old Testament? What language(s) was it written in? How did we get the Old Testament? Why do people study it? Why do you study it?

FOR SECTION D

READ:

MDB: Map in middle section--plate 2; "Fertile Crescent"; "Mesopotamia"; "Palestine, Geography of"; "Archaeology"

NOAB: 407-410 "Survey of the Geography, History, and Archaeology of the Bible Lands"

ASSIGNMENT #2:

Answer the study questions in the appendix on the "Geography and Archeology of the Old Testament World."

UNIT II: CREATION OF THE WORLD AND CREATION OF ISRAEL

Genesis literally means "beginnings." The Old Testament book of Genesis speaks of the beginnings of the world and humanity (chapters 1-11). It also speaks of the beginnings of God's specific relationship with Israel (chapters 12-50).

The story of God's special relationship with Israel's ancestors is continued in the book of Exodus. It is here that we read about God's dramatic deliverance of the descendants of the ancestors and daring act of commitment through covenant and law.

These stories of creation, sin, punishment, slavery, deliverance, covenant, and commandments are at the core of Jewish and Christian belief. They are stories that tell our story. We find ourselves in their pages and we are relieved to find that God is a god "merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, yet by no means clearing the guilty. . . (Exodus 34:6-7).

FOR SECTION A.1

READ:

Genesis chapters 1 and 2

MDB: "Genesis, Book of"; "Creation"; "Cosmology"; "Sources of the Pentateuch"

ASSIGNMENT #3:

Answer "reading questions for Genesis 1 and 2" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION A.2

READ:

Genesis chapters 3 through 11

MDB: "Genealogy in the Old Testament"; "Generation"; "Fall"; "Serpent"; "Satan in the Old Testament"; "Cain and Abel"; "Flood"; "Babel, Tower of"

ASSIGNMENT #4:

Complete the exercise on "the six-part pattern of crime, punishment and mercy in Genesis 3-11" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION B.1 and 2

READ:

Genesis chapters 12-36

MDB: "Ancestor"; "Patriarch"; "Promise"; "Abraham"; "Sarah"; "Hagar"; "Ishmael"; "Isaac"; "Family"; "Marriage in the Old Testament"; "Inheritance in the Old Testament"; "Women in the Old Testament"

ASSIGNMENT #5:

Answer "reading questions on the ancestors: Genesis 12-36" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION C. 1 and 2

READ:

Genesis chapters 37 through 50; Exodus chapters 1 and 2

MDB: "Joseph"; "Egypt"; "Exodus, Book of"; "Blacks in the Old Testament"; "Ethiopia"; "Nubia"; "Bible and Liberation Movements"

ASSIGNMENT #6:

Write a 2-3 page reflection paper on Africa and Israel's beginnings. Address the following questions: What is the significance of Egypt's connection with Africa? Slaves in the United States embraced the Exodus as a story of liberation. What new perspectives would be added to this story if the pharaoh were from Africa? What does this say about the struggle for liberation being more than a black/white issue? What does this say about lateral or horizontal violence in the gay and lesbian community?

FOR SECTION C.3

READ:

Exodus 3

MDB: "Theophany"; "God Language, Inclusive"; "God"; "God, Names for"; "Tetragrammaton"

ASSIGNMENT #7:

Write a 2-3 page reflection paper exploring the relationship between the revelation of the divine name YHWH and the importance of inclusive language and images for God.

FOR SECTION C.4.-6.

READ:

Exodus chapters 4 through 15 and 19 through 25; Leviticus chapters 17 through 26

MDB: "Moses"; "Plagues"; "Red Sea/Reed Sea"; "Exodus"; "Miracles;" "Covenant"; "Law in the Old Testament"; "Ten Commandments"; "Monotheism"; "Feasts and Festivals"; "Tabernacle"; "Ark"; "Priests"; "Levi/Levites"; "Leviticus, book of;" "clean,unclean;" "holiness in the Old Testament"

ASSIGNMENT #8:

Answer study questions on "Moses, the plagues, exodus, covenant and law" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION C.7

READ:

Exodus chapters 16 and 17; Numbers chapters 10 through 12 and 16

MDB: "Desert"; "Numbers, Book of"; "manna"

ASSIGNMENT #9:

Write a 2-3 page reflection paper on the "paradox of freedom" with regard to the wilderness wanderings after the exodus. What sort of parallels does this paradoxical nature of freedom have for the gay and lesbian community? (eg. coming out) UFMCC?

UNIT III: ISRAEL IN THE LAND OF CANAAN

It is not until the book of Joshua that God's promise of land to the ancestors is fulfilled. God made it clear to the Israelites that it was not anything that they had done which "won" them the land. Yahweh had given the land as a gift and the Israelites were to live responsibly in the land, always remembering to rely on God for their well being. The motto of the books of Deuteronomy through Kings is: "If Israel obeys Yahweh and is faithful to the covenant, they will be successful in the land. If Israel disobeys Yahweh and is unfaithful to the covenant, they will be unsuccessful in the land."

There has been much debate about this period of Israel's history. Biblical and historical evidence seem contradictory when it comes to describing how Israel actually inhabited the land. In some accounts, it seems to have been a swift military victory (Joshua), in other accounts it seems to have been a gradual settlement (Judges 1:1-2:5). There is still other evidence which would indicate that Israel's settlement of Canaan was a

combination of disenfranchised Canaanites and Israelites joining forces to overthrow an oppressive Canaanite government.

Other areas of debate include the violent and exclusive nature of the story. Persons who read this part of Israel's history are troubled by a story in which God tells the Israelites to totally destroy the Canaanites and drive them out of their land.

In all of this, the student needs to be reminded of the nature of biblical story telling. As we mentioned in Unit I, the stories of the Old Testament went through a long and complex process before they were written down. There were many traditions and stories circulating about how Israel inhabited the land. We also need to keep in mind that the Old Testament is written from Israel's perspective. The stories are concerned to show God's guidance in everything Israel did.

One also needs to be aware of principles of biblical interpretation which focus on the entire biblical message of God's redemptive love for all of humanity. The dynamic of scripture is such that the story is not always neat and tidy, because life is not that way, and the Bible is a divine and human book. There are what one scholar has called those "texts of terror" that are part of our Bible. We must read them in their larger cultural and historical contexts. We must wrestle with them as Jacob wrestled with the angel and know that in the wrestling our perspective may be changed, or at the very least we will have prevailed in some understanding in how to approach these texts as scripture.

FOR SECTIONS A and B

READ:

Deuteronomy chapters 7 through 10; Numbers chapters 13 and 14; Joshua chapters 1 through 8; Judges chapter 1:1 through 2:5

MDB: "Land"; "Conquest of Canaan"; "Canaan"; "Canaan, Inhabitants of"; "Land"

NOAB: 411-412 "The Israelite Settlement"

ASSIGNMENT #10:

Answer study questions on the "Israelite conquest of Canaan" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION C.1 and 2

READ:

Judges chapter 2:6 through 21:25; the book of Ruth

MDB: "Judges, Book of"; "Tribes"; "Amphictyony/Confederacy"; "Ruth, Book of"

ASSIGNMENT #11:

Answer "reading questions on Judges and Ruth" in appendix.

UNIT IV: BECOMING A GREAT NATION IN THE LAND

During the first 200 years that Israel lived in the land of Canaan they had a tribal existence, being led by different judges that God would raise up to deliver them out of trouble. Before too long the Israelites wanted to be like the other nations and have a king. The prophet and judge, Samuel, was against this. He and others felt having a king was a violation of the covenant. In the ancient Near Eastern world kings were considered gods, so for Israel to have a king meant breaking the first commandment. The way the Israelites rationalized getting a king was to say that their king was God's son, God's representative on earth. It was this type of thinking that led to the expectation of a messiah.

Israel became a great nation with wealth, military strength, and influence under the rules of king David and Solomon. It was during this time that Israel's poetic and wisdom traditions flourished. At the end of Solomon's reign, the kingdom broke out into civil war and split in half. The northern part of the kingdom continued to be called Israel and the southern part of the kingdom was called Judah. Each kingdom would have its own king and eventually each would fall to different enemies.

FOR SECTION A

READ:

1 Samuel chapter 1:1 through 13:15

MDB: "Samuel, Books of First and Second"; "Hannah"; "Samuel"; "Saul"; "Philistines"; "Ark"; "Kingship"

NOAB: 412-413 "The United Monarchy"

ASSIGNMENT #12:

Answer "reading questions 1 Samuel 1-13" in appendix.

FOR SECTION B

READ:

1 Samuel chapters 17 through 20; 2 Samuel chapters 1 through 18

MDB: "David"; "Succession Narrative"; "Bathsheba"; "Nathan"; "Jonathan"

ASSIGNMENT #13:

Answer "reading questions on David: 1 Samuel 17-20 and 2 Samuel 1-18" in appendix.

FOR SECTIONS C and D

READ:

1 Kings chapters 3 through 12; Proverbs chapters 1 through 9; Ecclesiastes 3

MDB: "Solomon"; "Jeroboam I"; "Rehoboam"; "United Monarchy"; "Proverbs, Book of"; "Proverb"; "Ecclesiastes, Book of"; "Wisdom in the Old Testament"; "Wisdom Literature"

ASSIGNMENT #14:

Answer "reading questions on Proverbs 1-9" in appendix.

FOR SECTION E

READ:

The Song of Solomon

MDB: "poetry"; "Song of Songs"

NOAB" "Characteristics of Hebrew Poetry," pp.392-397

ASSIGNMENT #15:

Write a 2-3 reaction paper on the article in the appendix by Dr. Mona West entitled, "The Song of Songs as Scripture for UFMCC."

UNIT V: LOSING THE LAND

After the United Monarchy split at the end of the reign of Solomon, the two kingdoms existed side-by-side for two hundred years. During this time surrounding empires and shifting political and economic situations challenged each kingdom to live in the land according to the covenant and the stipulations required by God in Deuteronomy. As in times past, God raised up persons who were spiritual leaders for the kingdoms of Israel and Judah in their time of trouble. These persons were called prophets. They were not merely predictors of the future; more importantly they had a word of God to speak to the present religious, political and economic situation.

The northern kingdom did not heed the words of its prophets and Assyria destroyed Israel in 722 B.C. Likewise, the southern kingdom of Judah did not heed the words of its prophets and it fell to the Babylonians in 587 B.C. With the Babylonian exile, Israel's history comes full circle: they lose the land promised to their ancestors in Genesis.

The Babylonian exile and loss of the land sent Israel and Judah into a theological crisis. They questioned the nature of God's power and promises. They questioned the nature of evil and suffering. They hoped for a new age and a messiah that would make all the world a "promised land."

FOR SECTION A

READ:

Deuteronomy chapter 16:18 through 18:22

MDB: "Prophet"; "Prophetess"; "Prophecy"

NOAB: 862-865 OT "The Prophetical Books"

ASSIGNMENT #16:

Answer "beginning questions on prophecy" from the appendix.

FOR SECTION B.1

READ:

The book of Amos

MDB: "Amos"; "Amos, Book of"; "Israel"; "Uzziah"; "Jeroboam II"; "Assyria"

ASSIGNMENT #17:

Answer "reading questions on the book of Amos" from the appendix.

FOR SECTION B.2

READ:

Isaiah chapters 1 through 12; 2 Kings chapters 16 through 18

MDB: "Isaiah"; "Isaiah, Book of"; "Ahaz"; "Immanuel"; "Messianism"; "Holiness in the Old Testament"

ASSIGNMENT #18:

Answer "reading questions for Isaiah 1-12" in the appendix.

FOR SECTION C

READ:

Jeremiah chapters 1 through 7; 20 through 22; 29 through 31

MDB: "Jeremiah"; "Jeremiah, Book of"; "Jehoiakim"; "Josiah"; "Judah, Kingdom of"; "Exile"; "Covenant"; "Babylon"

ASSIGNMENT #19:

Write a 3-5 page character sketch of Jeremiah the man and the prophet. See guidelines in the appendix.

UNIT VI: INHABITING THE LAND AGAIN

The Babylonian exile is not the final word of the Old Testament. After 40 years in exile, the Persians defeat the Babylonians and allow the Israelites to return to the land. However, it is not their land independently. They are allowed to live there under Persian rule. This will be the way the Israelites occupy the land until a brief period of independence in 164 B.C.

Returning to the land and restoring homes, cities, and the temple was not such an easy task. There had been a whole generation born in exile who knew Babylon as their home and did not want to "return." There had been some who were left behind in the land who did not want to welcome those who returned. The glorious prophecies of hope and restoration from Isaiah were not immediate and the people lacked motivation to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the temple.

Under the leadership and encouragement of people like the prophet Haggai, Ezra the scribe and Nehemiah the governor, the people finished rebuilding the city walls and the temple. It wasn't long, however, before the people slipped back into their old habits of hollow worship practices and economic injustice. The prophet Malachi pointed out these injustices and attempted to lead the people back to Yahweh. His words formulate the closing book of the Old Testament.

FOR SECTIONS A and B

READ:

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah, Haggai and Malachi

MDB: "Cyrus"; "Persia"; "Ezra"; "Ezra, book of"; "Nehemiah"; "Nehemiah, book of"; "Haggai"; "Haggai, book of"; "Malachi"; "Malachi, book of"

ASSIGNMENT #20:

Write a 3-5 page paper in response to the following questions: What were the specific theological, social, religious, and political challenges of the "restoration"? How were these challenges met in the ministries of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Malachi?

Study Questions: The Geography and
Archaeology of the Old Testament World
(Assignment #2)

1. List the modern day countries that make up the Fertile Crescent.
2. What does the word "Mesopotamia" literally mean? What is its relationship to the Fertile Crescent? What is its importance to biblical study?
3. Name and describe three features of the geography of Palestine which are significant for understanding the history of that land and why people live there.
4. Name and briefly describe 4 types of archaeological work.
5. Name and describe 3 dating methods used in archaeology.
6. Define "New Archaeology."

Appendix

**Study Questions: The Geography and
Archeology of the Old Testament World**
(Assignment #2)

1. List the modern day countries that make up the Fertile Crescent.
2. What does the word "Mesopotamia" literally mean? What is its relationship to the Fertile Crescent? What is its importance to biblical study?
3. Name and describe three features of the geography of Palestine which are significant for understanding the history of that land and why people live there.
4. Name and briefly describe 4 types of archeological work.
5. Name and describe 3 dating methods used in archeology.
6. Define "New Archeology."

READ GENESIS 1-11

1. What is the state of the earth at the beginning of this narrative and how does it differ from the state of things when creation begins in 1:1?
2. According to this part of Genesis, what is the order of the creation of the world? How does the order of creation in this story differ from the first story?
3. What new words, not used in part one, describe God's actions in part two? Make a list of the new ones. Look at your list. What new aspects of the personality or character of God do you get from these words and other details of the story? How does God seem to relate to the world and its creatures in this story?
4. How does the creation of man and women in chapter 2 differ from the creation of male and female in chapter 1? How would you explain the difference?
5. What would you say is the main point of this story of creation?

READING QUESTIONS FOR GENESIS 1 AND 2

(Assignment #3)

READ GENESIS 1:1-2:4a

1. What is the state of the world at the very beginning of the creative process? If you were to draw a picture of verses 1 and 2 what would it look like?
2. Make a list of what is created on each of the first six days. Look at your list of each day's creation. Can you see any logic to the order? The first day concerns light and darkness; so does the fourth day. In what ways might the second and fifth days also be similar to each other? The third and sixth days?
3. Certain phrases are repeated for almost every day and every creative act. What are they?
4. Make a list of the verbs that describe what God does. Consider the verbs describing God's actions. What sense of the personality or character of God do you get from these words and other details? What seems to be God's relation to the world and its creatures?
5. What does it mean to be created in the image of God in this story?
6. What would you say is the main point of this story of creation?

READ GENESIS 2:4b-2:25

1. What is the state of the earth at the beginning of this narrative and how does it differ from the state of things when creation begins in 1:1?
2. According to this part of Genesis, what is the order of the creation of the world? How does the order of creation in this story differ from the first story?
3. What new verbs, not used in part one, describe God's actions in part two? Make a list of the new ones. Look at your list. What new sense of the personality or character of God do you get from these words and other details of the story? How does God seem to relate to the world and its creatures in this story?
4. How does the creation of man and woman in chapter 2 differ from the creation of male and female in chapter 1? How would you explain this difference?
5. What would you say is the main point of this story of creation?

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

In your opinion, are these two different stories of creation? If so, how do you reconcile their differences? If not, how do you explain their differences?

What claims do each of these stories make about humankind's relationship to the created order?

How have these stories been used against the gay and lesbian community?

How might we reclaim them for our community?

**Exercise on: The Six-part Pattern
of Crime, Punishment and Mercy in Genesis 3-11**
(Assignment #4)

One biblical scholar has identified a six part pattern that repeats itself in the stories of Genesis chapters 3-11. The pattern is: temptation, sin, discovery of the sin by God, judgment, punishment, mercy.

1. Using this six part pattern, outline the stories of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3); Cain and Able (Genesis 4); Noah and the Flood (Genesis 6-9); the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9).
2. How do the genealogies in Genesis 5 and Genesis 10 connect these stories of crime, punishment and mercy?

Reading Questions on the Ancestors
Genesis 12-36
(Assignment #5)

1. What three things does God promise to the ancestors?
2. Abraham (Abram) was the first ancestor to receive this promise from God. Does God repeat the promise to the other ancestors? If so, who? Where do these repetitions occur in Genesis 12-36?
3. One way the writers of the book of Genesis hold our attention as readers is to build suspense around the promise. (When will God fulfill the promise? Will an ancestor do something to put the promise at risk?)

One example of the promise at risk or in danger is the sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22. How can the promise of many descendants be fulfilled if Abraham and Sarah's only son is put to death?

List all of the instances you can find in Genesis 12-36 in which the promise was threatened or put in danger.
4. Read the story of Hagar and Ishmael (Genesis 16 and 21) from the perspective of a woman of color. List some ways in which Hagar and Ishmael "complicate" the promise. What does this say about the role of marginalized people as part of God's plan/promise to the world?
5. Based on your reading of Genesis 24, how would you describe the marriage customs of the ancestors?
6. How would you describe the customs mentioned in Genesis 25 and 27? What was the role of the oldest son in this society? Why was Esau so mad that Jacob had deceived him in both situations? Why does Rebekah help Jacob deceive Esau and Isaac?
7. Describe the role of women in these ancestor stories. How were women valued in this society?
8. Using what you know about marriage, the value of sons, and the role of women in this society, how would you explain Genesis chapter 30?
9. Based on your reading of Genesis 31, do women have inheritance rights in this society? Explain.
10. Based on your reading of Genesis chapters 12-36, describe the religion of the ancestors.

**Study Questions on: Moses, the Plagues, Exodus,
Covenant and Law**
(Assignment #8)

1. Describe the roles of Moses, Aaron and Miriam in the story of the Exodus.
2. What is the literary purpose of the plagues in the story of the Exodus? What is their religious purpose?
3. What are some different ways to speak about the plagues as "miracles"?
4. Describe the last plague. What Jewish religious festival(s) are connected with this last plague?
5. How would the Israelites talk about the Exodus as a creation story?
6. Describe the scene of the giving of the 10 commandments in Exodus 19 and 20. How would you stage this in a movie or a play?
7. What does the word "covenant" mean? List and describe three types of covenants in the Old Testament. The giving of the 10 commandments and Israel's acceptance of them is an example of which type of covenant?
8. List and give the location of the 7 law collections in the Old Testament.
9. What is the Holiness Code? Where is it found in the Old Testament? Who wrote it? Why?
10. Explain the passages in Leviticus 18:22 and Leviticus 20:13 within the larger context of the Holiness Code.

Study Questions: Israel's Conquest of Canaan
(Assignment #10)

1. What was the importance of land in the biblical world and land in ancient Israel?
2. According to Deuteronomy chapters 7-10, what were God's requirements for Israel to live successfully in the land of Canaan?
3. What 3 models are used by biblical scholars to describe how Israel finally inhabited the land of Canaan? (Name and describe each model.)
4. How would you read the story of Israel's "conquest" of the land of Canaan if you were a Canaanite?
5. How would Latin American peasant farmers who have had their family land taken from them by North American industry and wealthy developers read the story of the conquest of Canaan?
6. How would Native American in the United States read the story of the conquest of Canaan?

Reading Questions on Judges and Ruth (Assignment #11)

For the book of Judges:

1. Based on your reading of Judges chapters 2-21, how would you describe Israel's first years in the promised land of Canaan?

For the book of Ruth:

Based on your reading of the book of Ruth, answer the following questions.

1. Who are the main characters in the book? What is the complicating action of the story--what is the problem to be solved? How is this problem solved and by whom?
2. Read Leviticus 19:9-10, Leviticus 25:25-28, and Deuteronomy 25:5-10. How and where are these laws mentioned in the book of Ruth? How do they affect the plot of the story?
3. How would you interpret Ruth's decision to return to Bethlehem with her mother-in-law Naomi? Why did she insist on returning to Bethlehem with Naomi? Some Old Testament interpreters have compared Ruth to Abraham. Why do you think they make this comparison?
4. Based on your reading of the book of Ruth, how would you describe Ruth as a character/person?
5. Based on your reading of the book of Ruth, how would you describe Naomi as a character/person?
6. Based on your reading of the book of Ruth, how would you describe Boaz as a character/person?
7. Why do you think the son born to Ruth and Boaz was considered the son of Naomi in 4:14-17?
8. Summarize the main point of the book of Ruth.
9. How could the book of Ruth provide a positive "ending" or balance to the book of Judges? How might we talk about the book as a "bridge" between the period of the Judges and the beginning of the monarchy? (Note the genealogy at the end of the book.)
10. In what ways can the story of Ruth serve as a paradigm for the gay and lesbian community?

READING QUESTIONS ON 1 SAMUEL CHAPTERS 1-13

(Assignment #12)

1. 1 Samuel 1 describes how an Israelite family, toward the end of the period of the judges, went to worship at Shiloh. Describe these visits on the basis of this chapter. Who went, and how often? What did they do there? Who was in charge at Shiloh? How was Yahweh's presence represented there, according to 1 Samuel 3:3?
2. Compare Hannah's prayer (1 Samuel 2:1-10) with the "Magnificat" in Luke 1:46-55. What ideas occur in both passages?
3. 1 Samuel 2:27-36 describes how a "man of God" says that the priesthood will pass from Eli's house to another priestly house. Analyze the main ideas in the man's speech. What ideas occur before the word "therefore" in verse 30? What ideas occur after this word?
4. What happened to the Philistines when they captured the ark of Yahweh (1 Samuel 5)? What did the Philistines do with the ark (1 Samuel 6)? What were the five cities of the Philistines (1 Samuel 6:17)? What happened to the Israelites when they looked into the ark (1 Samuel 6:19)? Can you think of any explanation for this?
5. According to one theory, two separate accounts have been combined in 1 Samuel 7-12 to describe the selection of Saul as king. Read the "Saul Source" in 1 Samuel 9:1-10:16; 11:1-15. Why does Saul go to Zuph, about 25 miles northwest of Jerusalem? What terms are used to describe Samuel in chapter 9? What does Yahweh tell Samuel to do? Where does Samuel anoint Saul as prince over Israel? Where do all the people make Saul king?
6. Read the "Samuel Source" in 1 Samuel 7:3-8:22; 10:17-27; 12:1-25. What functions does Samuel have? Who takes the initiative in asking for a king in 1 Samuel 8? Why? Does Samuel approve? Does Yahweh approve? How does Samuel describe their existence under a king? Where is Saul chosen as king?
7. If there are two different accounts of the founding of the monarchy in 1 Samuel 7-12, how do you think they arose? Why do you think later editors included them both?
8. Compare 1 Samuel 8:10-18 with the following passages which describe conditions later under king Solomon: 1 Kings 4:1-7; 5:1-14; 9:20-22.
9. What is the difference between a covenant people and a nation? How does Samuel attempt to combine these two ideas in his speech in 1 Samuel 12:12-25?
10. When Israel made the transition from tribal confederation to monarchy, what did it gain? What did it lose?

READING QUESTIONS ON DAVID
1 SAMUEL 17-20; 2 SAMUEL 1-18

(Assignment #13)

1. The familiar story of David and Goliath is told in 1 Samuel 17:1-58. Why is it significant that Goliath was a Philistine? To whom did David attribute his victory?
2. For another reference to Goliath, see 2 Samuel 21:19 and 1 Chronicles 20:5. Can you think of any reason for these different accounts?
3. Based on your reading of 1 Samuel 18-20, how would you describe the relationship between Jonathan and David? Does David's lament over Jonathan in 2 Samuel 1:26 indicate that the relationship may have been homosexual?
4. According to 2 Samuel 2:1-4, where did David first become king? Over what part of the country? According to 2 Samuel 5:1-5, who else asked David to be their king? If David became king over the whole country in two separate stages, what do you think he would have to be careful to do?
5. Why was Jerusalem known as the city of David, according to 2 Samuel 5:6-10? Why was it a good site for his capital?
6. Where did David install the ark, according to 2 Samuel 6:1-15? Why do you think he did this?
7. 2 Samuel 7:1-29 describes the beginning of the "royal theology" or the Davidic covenant. What does David want to do? What are the two meanings of the word "house" in this passage? What promises does Yahweh make to David?
8. What were some of David's military accomplishments, according to 2 Samuel 8:1-18?
9. Which two of the Ten Commandments did David violate, according to 2 Samuel 11? What was the point of Nathan's parable in 2 Samuel 12? What effect did it have on David? How does this incident illustrate the relationship between the Davidic covenant and the Sinai covenant (10 commandments)? On what did the prophet Nathan base his authority?
10. According to 2 Samuel 15, how did Absalom seek to replace his father (David) on the throne? Why do you think he went to Hebron? When David fled from Jerusalem, how did he arrange to receive information?
11. When David's army fought to regain his throne, what instructions did he give concerning Absalom (2 Samuel 18)? What happened? How did David react?
12. How are the events in 2 Samuel 15-18 a fulfillment of Nathan's prophecy in 2 Samuel 12?

READING QUESTIONS ON PROVERBS 1-9

(Assignment #14)

1. What is a proverb? List all the modern day proverbs that you know or have heard. (e.g. "An apple a day keeps the doctor away.")
3. What is the purpose of a proverb? What is its function in life? Why do they exist?
4. Read through Proverbs chapters 1-9 and mark the occurrences of the word "wisdom." Write out a definition of wisdom that would account for all the references you marked.
5. Compile a list of terms/phrases used in parallel with wisdom (e.g., in Proverbs 2:10 the term "wisdom" is in parallel with "knowledge"). How does this list add to your definition of wisdom?
6. Who is teaching whom in these chapters? What social context(s) do these proverbs imply?
7. List some key terms/themes of the teaching of the proverbs found in chapters 1-9. Notice the references to the term "life" (2:19; 3:13-18; 5:6; 8:35). What are these passages saying about life? What are the characteristics of life, according to the book of Proverbs?
8. Read Proverbs 8:1-36. Who is speaking in this section?
9. Describe Wisdom's role at creation in Proverbs 8:22-31.
10. How would you explain the images of Woman Wisdom and Woman Folly? Why are they female? How might this imagery relate to the social setting of wisdom teaching in the Proverbs 1-9?
11. In passages such as 3:13-18 and 4:5 & 7, the student is told to search for wisdom, or to get wisdom. How do you interpret the initiative of Woman Wisdom in chapter 8 in light of these passages?
12. Read John 1:1-18 in the New Testament. What are the similarities/differences between Jesus as the Word in John 1 and Woman Wisdom in Proverbs 8?

**THE SONG OF SONGS AS SCRIPTURE
FOR UFMCC
Copyright 1993 Dr. Mona West
(Assignment #15)**

INTRODUCTION

When was the last time you heard a sermon on the Song of Solomon? You're not really going to read one now. What I want to share with you are my reflections on the Song and the ways I think it functions as scripture for our community.

Over the years folks haven't quite known what to do with the Song. It almost didn't make it into the Bible. God is not mentioned at all in the book, nor is any event of salvation history. Solomon isn't even the book's author. The book was associated with Solomon because he was known for his poetic compositions and his love of women. In reality, the primary speaker in the poems is a woman. It is very likely that the author may have been female.

The book is a collection of erotic love poems, pure and simple. (Read 1:2-3; 1:13-14; 3:1; 7:6-9.)

WHAT MAKES THIS SCRIPTURE?

Well, religious leaders claimed that the book should be read as an allegory. For Jews it is supposed to be an allegory of Yahweh's relationship with Israel; for Christians the book is an allegory of Christ's relationship to the church.

Maybe people haven't known what to do with the book because they haven't known what to do with human sexuality. The graphic, erotic, celebratory, nature of the poetry makes people uncomfortable. It's easier to talk about Christ and the church than lips and breasts and torsos and sexual smells.

Currently, theologians are reaffirming the book's emphasis on the erotic. In an age when we as human beings feel alienated from the world, God, each other, and our own bodies, the Song of Songs can help us celebrate our sexual selves and rejoice in our physical bodies.

That is exactly why I think this book has much to say to us in UFMCC. As "sexual minorities" and the sexually disenfranchised in a heterosexist patriarchal culture, this book speaks powerfully to us as the word of God.

Feminists have taught us that we should be suspicious of any thing/any text that does violence to our essential selves as persons created in God's image. That is why we

spend so much time with those few passages in the Bible that mention homosexuality. Conversely, shouldn't we welcome with open arms those texts that speak to our essential selves as persons who have been created in the image of God as sexual beings?

Now you may ask, "How can the Song of Songs be scripture for UFMCC when it is clearly heterosexual love poetry?" I think it speaks to us as the word of God precisely because of its heterosexual context. As heterosexual love poetry, it transcends the strictures of patriarchal heterosexism. Love and sex are celebrated as ends in themselves--not as a means to marriage or procreation. Nowhere in the book are we told that the lovers are married, nor do they have children.

Nowhere in the book is one lover dominant over the other. The sin of sexism resulting from the fall in Genesis 3 is absent in the Song. The woman is equal partner with the man--seeking him out, beckoning him, describing his body, taking the initiative in lovemaking. The woman and the man are presented as mutual partners in relationship.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO LOVE

The poetry of the Song indicates that the lovers did not have an easy time of overcoming barriers to their love.

1. They had to struggle against barriers of race and class: 1:5-6. The woman's self-affirmation in 1:5-6 is the first indication that not all is well with the love expressed in the Song. The identity of the woman is uncertain. She is different from the daughters of Jerusalem in two ways. Her skin is dark as a result of working in the fields, which may indicate her lower socioeconomic status. (Her darkness implies the fairer skin of the daughters of Jerusalem who stayed indoors.) There is also the possibility that her skin color may denote a different ethnic background than the Jerusalem daughters. The claims she makes about herself are not apologetic, but boastful: "I am black and beautiful."
2. Verse 6 of chapter one indicates that the lovers had to overcome the barriers of family. Here and in 8:8-9 we are told that the woman's brothers try to keep her bound by patriarchal attitudes that refuse to recognize a woman as free agent of her own sexuality. In 8:10 the woman responds by claiming the goodness of her own sexuality which overcomes these barriers: "I was a wall, and my breasts were like towers; then I was in his eyes as one who brings peace."
3. The lovers also had to overcome societal norms. In 3:1-4 the woman puts herself at considerable risk seeking the beloved in the city streets during the middle of the night. She searches for him again in 5:2-7 but this time the sentinels of the city beat her when they find her. By patriarchal society's

standards she is not to be out in the middle of the night, alone, taking the initiative, seeking her beloved. (I can't help but wonder about the parallels in our own society concerning the safety of unaccompanied women in the city streets at night.)

These situations speak to our community as we struggle to overcome the same barriers which would keep us from expressing our love to one another.

The lovers' words to us in 8:6-7 ring true to our experience--they come to us as word of God: "love is as strong as death, passion fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If one offered for love all the wealth of their house it would be utterly scorned."

CLAIMING THE SONG FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Because the Song of Songs transcends the strictures of heterosexism and sexism, a way is made to celebrate love in all its forms, in all its variety:

1. There is reference to the smell and moistness of the woman which culminates in oral sex: 4:13-5:1.
2. Manual stimulation, penetration, and the sexual response cycle are alluded to in 5:2-6.
3. And of course, no erotic love poetry would be complete without the missionary position: 2:6;8:3.

The Song is word of God for us because it presents us with a variety of sexual behavior that is celebrated as good. It is sex enjoyed without shame, guilt, or the fear of disease.

Finally, the Song functions as scripture because it leads us to delight in our bodies and relate to all of creation. Throughout the Song the lovers describe one another with images taken from everyday life in Palestine. Body parts are compared to precious jewels, ornate architectural structures, luscious fruit. This delight in the physical body is a far cry from the shame the man and woman felt in Genesis 3 when they knew they were naked before God and each other.

With their physical bodies not only do the lovers experience each other, they also experience creation as they make love in the open countryside, celebrate spring (2:10-13), search for one another among flora and fauna, and eat nuts and fruits to sustain them in between their lovemaking.

James Nelson has said that the reality of our existence as sexual and spiritual beings in this world is that we live between two gardens: the Garden of Eden with the results of human disobedience being manifested in alienation, shame, and sexual dualism; the Erotic Garden of the Song which provides us with a vision of mutuality and a freedom of sexual expression without fear and guilt.

The good news is that God has come to be with us in the flesh. God is with us in our flesh. In our sensuous, lusty, all-shapes- and-sizes, desirable, flesh.

"Jesus as Christ is our faith community's paradigm, our living symbol of God's ongoing embodiment--and of the possibility of our being, in some measure, body-words of the divine love." (Nelson)

As followers of the Christ, we flesh out the word of God. Straining and groaning with all of creation toward that vision of the Erotic Garden.

3. What does it mean to call someone a prophet? How does a person become a prophet?

4. What are some ways we hear or see the word "prophecy" used today?

5. How would you describe the Old Testament prophets? How many can you name? (Name them below)

6. Are there prophets today like there were in biblical times? If so, who are they? Do you know any prophets?

BEGINNING QUESTIONS ON PROPHECY

(Assignment #16)

1. What do you think of when you hear the word prophet or prophecy?
2. How do prophets look and act? What is "typical" prophetic behavior?
3. What does it mean to call someone a prophet? How does a person become a prophet?
4. What are some ways we hear or see the word "prophecy" used today?
5. How would you describe the Old Testament prophets? How many can you name? (name them below)
6. Are there prophets today like there were in biblical times? If so, who are they? Do you know any prophets?

READING QUESTIONS ON THE BOOK OF AMOS
(Assignment #17)

1. What was the economic, religious, and political climate in Israel during the time of Amos' prophetic ministry?
2. Describe Amos as a person. How did Amos become a prophet? How did Amos perceive himself as a prophet? (Support your answers from the biblical text. Give chapter and verse numbers.)
3. To whom is Amos' message addressed?
4. What were the reasons for God's judgment upon Israel and what was God going to do to Israel. (Cite specific examples from the text.)
5. What techniques does Amos use to get his message across? Note different kinds of literary forms, images, theological concepts--cite specific examples from the text.
6. How does Amos express the power of Yahweh?
7. How does Amos talk about Yahweh's relationship with Israel?

**READING QUESTIONS FOR
ISAIAH CHAPTERS 1-12**
(Assignment #18)

1. Isaiah 6 describes Isaiah's call to be a prophet. Where did this occur? Do you think there is any connection between "King" in verse 1 and "King" in verse 5? How did Isaiah react to his sense of the holiness of Yahweh? What happened? Do you think the ideas in verses 9-10 indicate the purpose or the consequences of Isaiah's ministry?
2. Isaiah 1-5 contains sayings from Isaiah's early ministry, in the years after 742 B.C. What does Isaiah think of the people of his time, according to 1:2-6; 2:6-22? Why?
3. What does Isaiah think of the people's worship, according to 1:11-17? Why?
4. What criticisms of conditions in society does Isaiah make in 1:21-23; 3:13-15; 5:8-12, 22-23?
5. What does Isaiah want people to do, according to 1:16-17?
6. Does Isaiah think the people can be forgiven, according to 1:18-20? Does he indicate whether he thinks this is probable?
7. What titles for God does Isaiah use in 1:4, 9, 24; 2:12; 3:1, 15; 5:9, 16, 19, 24?
8. In the "Song of the Vineyard," 5:1-7, Isaiah apparently takes a popular song of the day and develops it into a parable about Yahweh and Israel. What did Yahweh expect from Israel? What did he find? Note the play on words in verse 7: justice (mishpat), bloodshed (mispach); righteousness (tsedaqah), cry for help (tse'aqah).
9. Much of the material in Isaiah chapters 7-10 reflects the Syro-Israelite crisis of 733-732 B.C. Assyria was expanding southward along the Mediterranean coast; Syria and Israel formed a coalition to defend themselves; they also attacked Judah to replace king Ahaz by an anti-Assyrian puppet king. Ahaz, weak and vacillating, did not know what to do. What advice did Isaiah give him, according to 7:1-9?
10. The Immanuel passage, 7:10-17, also reflects the Syro-Israelite crisis. How old do you think the child must be before he knows the difference between right and wrong (v. 16)? Before this happens, what relief will come to Judah? What disaster will follow?
11. Several interpretations of Immanuel ("God is with us") are possible: (1) Isaiah referred to the boy's childhood as a way of measuring time; (2) Isaiah was thinking of the next king, Hezekiah (715-687 B.C.); (3) Isaiah was predicting the birth of Jesus some seven centuries later (Matt. 1:23). Which interpretation or interpretations do you agree with? Why?

12. The account in 2 Kings 16 tells how Ahaz reacted at the time of the Syro-Israelite crisis. Did he take Isaiah's advice? What did he do?
13. What are some of the characteristics of the ideal king, according to the poems in 9:2-7; 11:1-9? Is it possible that Isaiah originally composed these poems in honor of Hezekiah?
14. How would you summarize the important ideas that Isaiah expressed in his ministry?

Guidelines for character sketch of Jeremiah

(Assignment #19)

We know probably know more about the life and inner struggles of Jeremiah than any other prophet. His prophetic career spanned the most turbulent years of Israel's history. Jeremiah was a prophet who spoke a word of judgment which led to the Babylonian exile. He was also a prophet who spoke a word of hope and encouragement to the people once they were in exile.

Based on your reading about Jeremiah from the Bible and the Mercer Dictionary (see student syllabus), write a 3-5 page character sketch of Jeremiah, the man and the prophet. Include information about the following:

1. Jeremiah's call to ministry;
2. His doubts and struggles concerning his ministry;
3. His relationship to his people;
4. The basic points of his messages of judgment, including images he uses to get his points across;
5. Basic points of his message of hope and encouragement, including images he uses to get his points across.

Guidelines for Character Sketch of Jeremiah
(Assignment #10)

We know probably know more about the life and inner struggles of Jeremiah than any other prophet. His prophetic career spanned the most turbulent years of Israel's history. Jeremiah was a prophet who spoke a word of judgment which led to the Babylonian exile. He was also a prophet who spoke a word of hope and encouragement to the people once they were in exile.

Based on your reading about Jeremiah from the Bible and the Master Dictionary (see student syllabus), write a 3-5 page character sketch of Jeremiah, the man and the prophet. Include information about the following:

1. Jeremiah's call to ministry;
2. His doubts and struggles concerning his ministry;
3. His relationship to his people;
4. The basic points of his messages of judgment, including images he uses to get his points across;
5. Basic points of his message of hope and encouragement, including images he uses to get his points across.

Name Chip Carson

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE
QUIZ 2

Identify:

1. amphictyony _____

2. cherubim _____

3. Zion theology _____

4. Davidic covenant _____

5. Royal Psalms _____

Match

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| _____ 6. Meribaal | a. Judge over Israel. |
| _____ 7. Deborah | b. Tragic "king." |
| _____ 8. Athaliah | c. "ruin" |
| <u>H</u> 9. Jericho | d. David's son |
| _____ 10. Ai | <u>e.</u> "father" of prophets |
| _____ 11. Absalom | f. Capital city of Samaria |
| _____ 12. Nabi | g. League of 12 tribes |
| _____ 13. Samaria | h. Had been destroyed before Joshua. |
| <u>B</u> 14. Saul | i. Jonathan's son |
| <u>E</u> 15. Elijah | j. Wicked queen |
| | k. Member of prophetic guild |

16. Why was Baalism considered so shameful by the Israelites?

It was a fertility religion of a settled people and the Israelites were nomadic --- the fertility rites.

17. Why was Saul considered anomic?

18. Why were the stories of the patriarchs written?

To support the legitimacy of the House of David

19. What was the primary reason for the division of the two kingdoms?

20. What were some characteristics of Solomon's kingdom?

Bonus: Name the main characters in the myth of Baal. _____

NAME: _____

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE
QUIZ #1

1. Identify Yahweh. _____

2. Identify Elohim. _____

3. How does the Exodus relate to the Christian communion? _____

4. What is the "four-source hypothesis" for the Hebrew scriptures? _____

5. What is the significance of the "habiru"? _____

Match the following:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <u>J</u> 6. Authorized Version | a. "...a nation as numerous as the stars" |
| <u>a</u> 7. Second covenant | b. First five books of the Bible. |
| <u>h</u> 8. Third covenant | c. Aramaic translation |
| <u>L</u> 9. Legend | d. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob narratives |
| <u>d</u> 10. Saga | e. Flood narrative |
| <u>e</u> 11. Etiology myth | f. Hebrew scriptures |
| <u>f</u> 12. Tanak | g. Philistines |
| <u>b</u> 13. Pentateuch | h. Suzerainty treaty |
| <u>k</u> 14. Papyrus | i. Palestinian deity |
| <u>C</u> 15. Targum | j. King James |
| | k. Scroll material |
| | l. Moses infancy narrative |

BONUS: With whom was the first covenant made and what was it's sign?

Identify -
1. ~~The~~ four source hypothesis for the Synoptic Gospels

2. What types of material ^{are some of the} ~~are~~ ^{which} make up the Synoptic Gospels?

3. What is the "Messianic Secret" in Mark?

4. Some elements of X'tian thought actually begin in the O.T.

Describe A. The K of G in O.T. and N.T.

B. the Son of Man

C.

5. Name the part who were

1. The Sadducees

2. The Pharisees

3. The Essenes

4. The Zealots

D.

5. How does Jesus fit the O.T. concept of the "Messiah"?

6. Identify Eschatology

7. Why were the two "testes" who were crucified ~~with~~ Jesus identified as "robbers"?

8. Define Kerygma

9. What ~~was~~ ^{were two of} the ~~central~~ ^{core} beliefs of the early Christian church regarding Jesus?

10. What 3 manifestations of the Spirit were ~~manifested~~ present in the early Christian Church that proclaimed it to be the eschatological community?

11. Who were the "God-fearers"?

12. What is the ^{second} main reason for Paul writing the Thessalonian letters?

13. Many of Paul's letters center on a dispute he was having. Who was it with + what was the dispute about?

14. Define Gnosticism

15. " Noeticism

16. " Stoicism

17. " Pax Romana

18. " Epicureanism

19. The "Mystery Religions" were important to an understanding of the time of Paul. ~~How do they~~ In what ways were Christianity & the Mystery Religions similar?

19. Why ~~was~~ ^{is an understanding of} Gnostic dualism important to our understanding of Paul's sexual attitudes.

20. How does ~~Paul's~~ ^{statement in} 1 Cor. 7: 17-31 affect the gay person?

21. How does the presence of "angels" in the worship service affect the fact that women should cover their hair?

22. What ^{Christian} ~~were~~ ^{were} ~~probably~~ present in the early Christian church? Give evidence for their presence.

23. What is one of the distinctive traits ~~in~~ ^{of} the Gospel of John ~~of the way~~ ^{of the way} Jesus speaks of himself?

24. In John, Jesus performs "signs" - what ~~do~~ these "signs" signify?

~~25. What is of all the writings in the Gospels deal with one~~

26. The letters of John deal with a conflict ^{Essay} going on in the early church. Discuss this conflict and John's teachings about it.

19. Why ~~was~~ ^{is} drastic decisions important
to our understanding of Paul's letters?
Attitudes

20. How does ~~Paul's~~ ^{the} ~~letter~~ ^{statement} 1 Cor. 7:12-21 affect the
gay person?

21. How does the presence of "angels" in
this worship service affect the fact
that women should cover their hair?

22. What ~~is~~ ^{are} ~~the~~ ^{those} ~~present~~ ^{where} in the
early ~~church~~ ^{churches}? ~~What~~ ^{How} ~~important~~ ^{important} for
their presence?

23. What is one of the distinctive traits
of the thought of ~~Paul~~ ^{the} ~~early church~~ ^{early church}?
24. In John, Jesus performs "signs" - what
are these "signs"? ~~signs~~ ^{signs} ~~signifying~~ ^{signifying}
25. ~~What is the relationship between the signs~~
~~and the~~

26. The letters of John deal with a conflict
going on in the early church. ~~What~~ ^{What}
is this conflict and John's teachings about it?

MACCABEES

Daniel over to us, or else we will kill you and your household." ³⁰The king saw that they were pressing him hard, and under compulsion he handed Daniel over to them.

Daniel in the Lions' Den

31 They threw Daniel into the lions' den, and he was there for six days. ³²There were seven lions in the den, and every day they had been given two human bodies and two sheep; but now they were given nothing, so that they would devour Daniel.

33 Now the prophet Habakkuk was in Judea; he had made a stew and had broken bread into a bowl, and was going into the field to take it to the reapers. ³⁴But the angel of the Lord said to Habakkuk, "Take the food that you have to Babylon, to Daniel, in the lions' den." ³⁵Habakkuk said, "Sir, I have never seen Babylon, and I know nothing about the den." ³⁶Then the angel of the

Lord took him by the crown of his head and carried him by his hair; with the speed of the wind^d he set him down in Babylon, right over the den.

37 Then Habakkuk shouted, "Daniel, Daniel! Take the food that God has sent you." ³⁸Daniel said, "You have remembered me, O God, and have not forsaken those who love you." ³⁹So Daniel got up and ate. And the angel of God immediately returned Habakkuk to his own place.

40 On the seventh day the king came to mourn for Daniel. When he came to the den he looked in, and there sat Daniel! ⁴¹The king shouted with a loud voice, "You are great, O Lord, the God of Daniel, and there is no other besides you!" ⁴²Then he pulled Daniel^e out, and threw into the den those who had attempted his destruction, and they were instantly eaten before his eyes.

^d Or by the power of his spirit ^e Gk him

1 MACCABEES

Alexander the Great

1 After Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian, who came from the land of Kittim, had defeated^a King Darius of the Persians and the Medes, he succeeded him as king. (He had previously become king of Greece.) ²He fought many battles, conquered strongholds, and put to death the kings of the earth. ³He advanced to the ends of the earth, and plundered many nations. When the earth became quiet before him, he was exalted, and his heart was lifted up. ⁴He gathered a very strong army and ruled over countries, nations, and princes, and they became tributary to him.

5 After this he fell sick and perceived that he was dying. ⁶So he summoned his most honored officers, who had been brought up with him from youth, and divided his kingdom among them while he was still alive.

⁷And after Alexander had reigned twelve years, he died.

8 Then his officers began to rule, each in his own place. ⁹They all put on crowns after his death, and so did their descendants after them for many years; and they caused many evils on the earth.

Antiochus Epiphanes and Renegade Jews

10 From them came forth a sinful root, Antiochus Epiphanes, son of King Antiochus; he had been a hostage in Rome. He began to reign in the one hundred thirty-seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks.^b

11 In those days certain renegades came out from Israel and misled many, saying, "Let us go and make a covenant with the Gentiles around us, for since we separated from them many disasters have come upon

^a Gk adds and he defeated ^b 175 B.C.

us." ¹²This proposal pleased them, ¹³and some of the people eagerly went to the king, who authorized them to observe the ordinances of the Gentiles. ¹⁴So they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, according to Gentile custom, ¹⁵and removed the marks of circumcision, and abandoned the holy covenant. They joined with the Gentiles and sold themselves to do evil.

Antiochus in Egypt

16 When Antiochus saw that his kingdom was established, he determined to become king of the land of Egypt, in order that he might reign over both kingdoms. ¹⁷So he invaded Egypt with a strong force, with chariots and elephants and cavalry and with a large fleet. ¹⁸He engaged King Ptolemy of Egypt in battle, and Ptolemy turned and fled before him, and many were wounded and fell. ¹⁹They captured the fortified cities in the land of Egypt, and he plundered the land of Egypt.

Persecution of the Jews

20 After subduing Egypt, Antiochus returned in the one hundred forty-third year. He went up against Israel and came to Jerusalem with a strong force. ²¹He arrogantly entered the sanctuary and took the golden altar, the lampstand for the light, and all its utensils. ²²He took also the table for the bread of the Presence, the cups for drink offerings, the bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, the crowns, and the gold decoration on the front of the temple; he stripped it all off. ²³He took the silver and the gold, and the costly vessels; he took also the hidden treasures that he found. ²⁴Taking them all, he went into his own land.

He shed much blood,
and spoke with great arrogance.

- ²⁵ Israel mourned deeply in every community,
²⁶ rulers and elders groaned,
young women and young men became faint,
the beauty of the women faded.
²⁷ Every bridegroom took up the lament;
she who sat in the bridal chamber
was mourning.
²⁸ Even the land trembled for its inhabitants,
and all the house of Jacob was
clothed with shame.

The Occupation of Jerusalem

29 Two years later the king sent to the cities of Judah a chief collector of tribute, and he came to Jerusalem with a large force. ³⁰Deceitfully he spoke peaceable words to them, and they believed him; but he suddenly fell upon the city, dealt it a severe blow, and destroyed many people of Israel. ³¹He plundered the city, burned it with fire, and tore down its houses and its surrounding walls. ³²They took captive the women and children, and seized the livestock. ³³Then they fortified the city of David with a great strong wall and strong towers, and it became their citadel. ³⁴They stationed there a sinful people, men who were renegades. These strengthened their position; ³⁵they stored up arms and food, and collecting the spoils of Jerusalem they stored them there, and became a great menace,

- ³⁶ for the citadel⁴ became an ambush
against the sanctuary,
an evil adversary of Israel at all times.
³⁷ On every side of the sanctuary they
shed innocent blood;

they even defiled the sanctuary.
³⁸ Because of them the residents of
Jerusalem fled;
she became a dwelling of strangers;
she became strange to her offspring,
and her children forsook her.

- ³⁹ Her sanctuary became desolate like a
desert;
her feasts were turned into mourning,
her sabbaths into a reproach,
her honor into contempt.
⁴⁰ Her dishonor now grew as great as
her glory;
her exaltation was turned into
mourning.

Installation of Gentile Cults

41 Then the king wrote to his whole kingdom that all should be one people, ⁴²and that all should give up their particular customs. ⁴³All the Gentiles accepted the command of the king. Many even from Israel gladly adopted his religion; they sacrificed to idols and profaned the sabbath. ⁴⁴And the king sent letters by messengers to Jerusalem and the towns of Judah; he directed them to follow customs strange to the land, ⁴⁵to forbid burnt offerings and sacrifices and drink offerings in the sanctuary, to profane sabbaths and festivals, ⁴⁶to

defile the sanctuary and the priests, ⁴⁷to build altars and sacred precincts and shrines for idols, to sacrifice swine and other unclean animals, ⁴⁸and to leave their sons uncircumcised. They were to make themselves abominable by everything unclean and profane, ⁴⁹so that they would forget the law and change all the ordinances. ⁵⁰He added, "And whoever does not obey the command of the king shall die."

51 In such words he wrote to his whole kingdom. He appointed inspectors over all the people and commanded the towns of Judah to offer sacrifice, town by town. ⁵²Many of the people, everyone who forsook the law, joined them, and they did evil in the land; ⁵³they drove Israel into hiding in every place of refuge they had.

54 Now on the fifteenth day of Chislev, in the one hundred forty-fifth year, ¹ they erected a desolating sacrilege on the altar of burnt offering. They also built altars in the surrounding towns of Judah, ⁵⁵and offered incense at the doors of the houses and in the streets. ⁵⁶The books of the law that they found they tore to pieces and burned with fire. ⁵⁷Anyone found possessing the book of the covenant, or anyone who adhered to the law, was condemned to death by decree of the king. ⁵⁸They kept using violence against Israel, against those who were found month after month in the towns. ⁵⁹On the twenty-fifth day of the month they offered sacrifice on the altar that was on top of the altar of burnt offering. ⁶⁰According to the decree, they put to death the women who had their children circumcised, ⁶¹and their families and those who circumcised them; and they hung the infants from their mothers' necks.

62 But many in Israel stood firm and were resolved in their hearts not to eat unclean food. ⁶³They chose to die rather than to be defiled by food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die. ⁶⁴Very great wrath came upon Israel.

Mattathias and His Sons

2 In those days Mattathias son of John son of Simeon, a priest of the family of Joarib, moved from Jerusalem and settled in Modein. ²He had five sons, John surnamed Gaddi, ³Simon called Thassi, ⁴Judas called Maccabeus, ⁵Eleazar called Avaran,

and Jonathan called Apphus. ⁶He saw the blasphemies being committed in Judah and Jerusalem, ⁷and said,

"Alas! Why was I born to see this,
the ruin of my people, the ruin of
the holy city,
and to live there when it was given
over to the enemy,

the sanctuary given over to aliens?
⁸ Her temple has become like a person
without honor;⁹

⁹ her glorious vessels have been
carried into exile.

Her infants have been killed in her
streets,

her youths by the sword of the foe.

¹⁰ What nation has not inherited her
palaces¹¹

and has not seized her spoils?

¹¹ All her adornment has been taken
away;

no longer free, she has become a
slave.

¹² And see, our holy place, our beauty,
and our glory have been laid waste;
the Gentiles have profaned them.

¹³ Why should we live any longer?"

14 Then Mattathias and his sons tore their clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourned greatly.

Pagan Worship Refused

15 The king's officers who were enforcing the apostasy came to the town of Modein to make them offer sacrifice. ¹⁶Many from Israel came to them; and Mattathias and his sons were assembled. ¹⁷Then the king's officers spoke to Mattathias as follows: "You are a leader, honored and great in this town, and supported by sons and brothers. ¹⁸Now be the first to come and do what the king commands, as all the Gentiles and the people of Judah and those that are left in Jerusalem have done. Then you and your sons will be numbered among the Friends of the king, and you and your sons will be honored with silver and gold and many gifts."

19 But Mattathias answered and said in a loud voice: "Even if all the nations that live under the rule of the king obey him, and have chosen to obey his commandments, everyone of them abandoning the religion of their ancestors, ²⁰I and my sons

¹Gk lacks *He added* ²167 B.C. ³Meaning of Gk uncertain ⁴Other ancient authorities read *has not had a part in her kingdom*

and my brothers will continue to live by the covenant of our ancestors. ²¹Far be it from us to desert the law and the ordinances. ²²We will not obey the king's words by turning aside from our religion to the right hand or to the left."

²³ When he had finished speaking these words, a Jew came forward in the sight of all to offer sacrifice on the altar in Modein, according to the king's command. ²⁴When Mattathias saw it, he burned with zeal and his heart was stirred. He gave vent to righteous anger; he ran and killed him on the altar. ²⁵At the same time he killed the king's officer who was forcing them to sacrifice, and he tore down the altar. ²⁶Thus he burned with zeal for the law, just as Phinehas did against Zimri son of Salu.

²⁷ Then Mattathias cried out in the town with a loud voice, saying: "Let every one who is zealous for the law and supports the covenant come out with me!" ²⁸Then he and his sons fled to the hills and left all that they had in the town.

²⁹ At that time many who were seeking righteousness and justice went down to the wilderness to live there, ³⁰they, their sons, their wives, and their livestock, because troubles pressed heavily upon them. ³¹And it was reported to the king's officers, and to the troops in Jerusalem the city of David, that those who had rejected the king's command had gone down to the hiding places in the wilderness. ³²Many pursued them, and overtook them; they encamped opposite them and prepared for battle against them on the sabbath day. ³³They said to them, "Enough of this! Come out and do what the king commands, and you will live." ³⁴But they said, "We will not come out, nor will we do what the king commands and so profane the sabbath day." ³⁵Then the enemy¹ quickly attacked them. ³⁶But they did not answer them or hurl a stone at them or block up their hiding places, ³⁷for they said, "Let us all die in our innocence; heaven and earth testify for us that you are killing us unjustly." ³⁸So they attacked them on the sabbath, and they died, with their wives and children and livestock, to the number of a thousand persons.

³⁹ When Mattathias and his friends learned of it, they mourned for them deeply. ⁴⁰And all said to their neighbors: "If we all do as our kindred have done and refuse to

fight with the Gentiles for our lives and for our ordinances, they will quickly destroy us from the earth." ⁴¹So they made this decision that day: "Let us fight against anyone who comes to attack us on the sabbath day; let us not all die as our kindred died in their hiding places."

Counter-Attack

⁴² Then there united with them a company of Hasideans, mighty warriors of Israel, all who offered themselves willingly for the law. ⁴³And all who became fugitives to escape their troubles joined them and reinforced them. ⁴⁴They organized an army, and struck down sinners in their anger and renegades in their wrath; the survivors fled to the Gentiles for safety. ⁴⁵And Mattathias and his friends went around and tore down the altars; ⁴⁶they forcibly circumcised all the uncircumcised boys that they found within the borders of Israel. ⁴⁷They hunted down the arrogant, and the work prospered in their hands. ⁴⁸They rescued the law out of the hands of the Gentiles and kings, and they never let the sinner gain the upper hand.

The Last Words of Mattathias

⁴⁹ Now the days drew near for Mattathias to die, and he said to his sons: "Arrogance and scorn have now become strong; it is a time of ruin and furious anger. ⁵⁰Now, my children, show zeal for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of our ancestors.

⁵¹ "Remember the deeds of the ancestors, which they did in their generations; and you will receive great honor and an everlasting name. ⁵²Was not Abraham found faithful when tested, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness? ⁵³Joseph in the time of his distress kept the commandment, and became lord of Egypt. ⁵⁴Phinehas our ancestor, because he was deeply zealous, received the covenant of everlasting priesthood. ⁵⁵Joshua, because he fulfilled the command, became a judge in Israel. ⁵⁶Caleb, because he testified in the assembly, received an inheritance in the land. ⁵⁷David, because he was merciful, inherited the throne of the kingdom forever. ⁵⁸Elijah, because of great zeal for the law, was taken up into heaven. ⁵⁹Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael believed and were saved from the flame. ⁶⁰Daniel,

¹ Gk *they*

because of his innocence, was delivered from the mouth of the lions.

61 "And so observe, from generation to generation, that none of those who put their trust in him will lack strength. ⁶²Do not fear the words of sinners, for their splendor will turn into dung and worms. ⁶³Today they will be exalted, but tomorrow they will not be found, because they will have returned to the dust, and their plans will have perished. ⁶⁴My children, be courageous and grow strong in the law, for by it you will gain honor.

65 "Here is your brother Simeon who, I know, is wise in counsel; always listen to him; he shall be your father. ⁶⁶Judas Maccabeus has been a mighty warrior from his youth; he shall command the army for you and fight the battle against the peoples. ⁶⁷You shall rally around you all who observe the law, and avenge the wrong done to your people. ⁶⁸Pay back the Gentiles in full, and obey the commands of the law."

69 Then he blessed them, and was gathered to his ancestors. ⁷⁰He died in the one hundred forty-sixth year^k and was buried in the tomb of his ancestors at Modein. And all Israel mourned for him with great lamentation.

The Early Victories of Judas

3 Then his son Judas, who was called Maccabeus, took command in his place. ²All his brothers and all who had joined his father helped him; they gladly fought for Israel.

³ He extended the glory of his people.

Like a giant he put on his breastplate;

he bound on his armor of war and waged battles, protecting the camp by his sword.

⁴ He was like a lion in his deeds, like a lion's cub roaring for prey.

⁵ He searched out and pursued those who broke the law; he burned those who troubled his people.

⁶ Lawbreakers shrank back for fear of him; all the evildoers were confounded; and deliverance prospered by his hand.

⁷ He embittered many kings, but he made Jacob glad by his deeds,

and his memory is blessed forever.

⁸ He went through the cities of Judah; he destroyed the ungodly out of the land;^l

thus he turned away wrath from Israel.

⁹ He was renowned to the ends of the earth;

he gathered in those who were perishing.

10 Apollonius now gathered together Gentiles and a large force from Samaria to fight against Israel. ¹¹When Judas learned of it, he went out to meet him, and he defeated and killed him. Many were wounded and fell, and the rest fled. ¹²Then they seized their spoils; and Judas took the sword of Apollonius, and used it in battle the rest of his life.

13 When Seron, the commander of the Syrian army, heard that Judas had gathered a large company, including a body of faithful soldiers who stayed with him and went out to battle, ¹⁴he said, "I will make a name for myself and win honor in the kingdom. I will make war on Judas and his companions, who scorn the king's command." ¹⁵Once again a strong army of godless men went up with him to help him, to take vengeance on the Israelites.

16 When he approached the ascent of Beth-horon, Judas went out to meet him with a small company. ¹⁷But when they saw the army coming to meet them, they said to Judas, "How can we, few as we are, fight against so great and so strong a multitude? And we are faint, for we have eaten nothing today." ¹⁸Judas replied, "It is easy for many to be hemmed in by few, for in the sight of Heaven there is no difference between saving by many or by few. ¹⁹It is not on the size of the army that victory in battle depends, but strength comes from Heaven. ²⁰They come against us in great insolence and lawlessness to destroy us and our wives and our children, and to despoil us; ²¹but we fight for our lives and our laws. ²²He himself will crush them before us; as for you, do not be afraid of them."

23 When he finished speaking, he rushed suddenly against Seron and his army, and they were crushed before him. ²⁴They pursued them^m down the descent of Beth-horon to the plain; eight hundred of them fell, and the rest fled into the land of the Philistines. ²⁵Then Judas and his brothers began to be

^l Or of the people ^k 166 B.C. ^l Gk it ^m Other ancient authorities read him

feared, and terror fell on the Gentiles all around them. ²⁶His fame reached the king, and the Gentiles talked of the battles of Judas.

The Policy of Antiochus

27 When King Antiochus heard these reports, he was greatly angered; and he sent and gathered all the forces of his kingdom, a very strong army. ²⁸He opened his coffers and gave a year's pay to his forces, and ordered them to be ready for any need. ²⁹Then he saw that the money in the treasury was exhausted, and that the revenues from the country were small because of the dissension and disaster that he had caused in the land by abolishing the laws that had existed from the earliest days. ³⁰He feared that he might not have such funds as he had before for his expenses and for the gifts that he used to give more lavishly than preceding kings. ³¹He was greatly perplexed in mind; then he determined to go to Persia and collect the revenues from those regions and raise a large fund.

32 He left Lysias, a distinguished man of royal lineage, in charge of the king's affairs from the river Euphrates to the borders of Egypt. ³³Lysias was also to take care of his son Antiochus until he returned. ³⁴And he turned over to Lysias^a half of his forces and the elephants, and gave him orders about all that he wanted done. As for the residents of Judea and Jerusalem, ³⁵Lysias was to send a force against them to wipe out and destroy the strength of Israel and the remnant of Jerusalem; he was to banish the memory of them from the place, ³⁶settle aliens in all their territory, and distribute their land by lot. ³⁷Then the king took the remaining half of his forces and left Antioch his capital in the one hundred and forty-seventh year.^o He crossed the Euphrates river and went through the upper provinces.

Preparations for Battle

38 Lysias chose Ptolemy son of Dorymenes, and Nicanor and Gorgias, able men among the Friends of the king, ³⁹and sent with them forty thousand infantry and seven thousand cavalry to go into the land of Judah and destroy it, as the king had commanded. ⁴⁰So they set out with their entire force, and when they arrived they encamped

near Emmaus in the plain. ⁴¹When the traders of the region heard what was said to them, they took silver and gold in immense amounts, and letters,^p and went to the camp to get the Israelites for slaves. And forces from Syria and the land of the Philistines joined with them.

42 Now Judas and his brothers saw that misfortunes had increased and that the forces were encamped in their territory. They also learned what the king had commanded to do to the people to cause their final destruction. ⁴³But they said to one another, "Let us restore the ruins of our people, and fight for our people and the sanctuary." ⁴⁴So the congregation assembled to be ready for battle, and to pray and ask for mercy and compassion.

⁴⁵ Jerusalem was uninhabited like a wilderness;

not one of her children went in or out.
The sanctuary was trampled down,
and aliens held the citadel;
it was a lodging place for the Gentiles.
Joy was taken from Jacob;

the flute and the harp ceased to play.

46 Then they gathered together and went to Mizpah, opposite Jerusalem, because Israel formerly had a place of prayer in Mizpah. ⁴⁷They fasted that day, put on sackcloth and sprinkled ashes on their heads, and tore their clothes. ⁴⁸And they opened the book of the law to inquire into those matters about which the Gentiles consulted the likenesses of their gods. ⁴⁹They also brought the vestments of the priesthood and the first fruits and the tithes, and they stirred up the nazirites^q who had completed their days; ⁵⁰and they cried aloud to Heaven, saying,

"What shall we do with these?

Where shall we take them?

⁵¹ Your sanctuary is trampled down and profaned,

and your priests mourn in
humiliation.

⁵² Here the Gentiles are assembled
against us to destroy us;

you know what they plot against us.

⁵³ How will we be able to withstand them,
if you do not help us?"

54 Then they sounded the trumpets and gave a loud shout. ⁵⁵After this Judas appointed leaders of the people, in charge of thousands and hundreds and fifties and tens. ⁵⁶Those who were building houses, or were about to be married, or were planting

^a Gk him ^o 165 B.C. ^p Syr: Gk Mss, Vg slaves ^q That is those separated or those consecrated

a vineyard, or were fainthearted, he told to go home again, according to the law.⁵⁷ Then the army marched out and encamped to the south of Emmaus.

58 And Judas said, "Arm yourselves and be courageous. Be ready early in the morning to fight with these Gentiles who have assembled against us to destroy us and our sanctuary.⁵⁹ It is better for us to die in battle than to see the misfortunes of our nation and of the sanctuary.⁶⁰ But as his will in heaven may be, so shall he do."

The Battle at Emmaus

4 Now Gorgias took five thousand infantry and one thousand picked cavalry, and this division moved out by night² to fall upon the camp of the Jews and attack them suddenly. Men from the citadel were his guides.³ But Judas heard of it, and he and his warriors moved out to attack the king's force in Emmaus⁴ while the division was still absent from the camp.⁵ When Gorgias entered the camp of Judas by night, he found no one there, so he looked for them in the hills, because he said, "These men are running away from us."

6 At daybreak Judas appeared in the plain with three thousand men, but they did not have armor and swords such as they desired.⁷ And they saw the camp of the Gentiles, strong and fortified, with cavalry all around it; and these men were trained in war.⁸ But Judas said to those who were with him, "Do not fear their numbers or be afraid when they charge.⁹ Remember how our ancestors were saved at the Red Sea, when Pharaoh with his forces pursued them.¹⁰ And now, let us cry to Heaven, to see whether he will favor us and remember his covenant with our ancestors and crush this army before us today.¹¹ Then all the Gentiles will know that there is one who redeems and saves Israel."

12 When the foreigners looked up and saw them coming against them,¹³ they went out from their camp to battle. Then the men with Judas blew their trumpets¹⁴ and engaged in battle. The Gentiles were crushed, and fled into the plain,¹⁵ and all those in the rear fell by the sword. They pursued them to Gazara, and to the plains of Idumea, and to Azotus and Jamnia; and three thousand of them fell.¹⁶ Then Judas and his force turned back from pursuing them,¹⁷ and he

said to the people, "Do not be greedy for plunder, for there is a battle before us;¹⁸ Gorgias and his force are near us in the hills. But stand now against our enemies and fight them, and afterward seize the plunder boldly."

19 Just as Judas was finishing this speech, a detachment appeared, coming out of the hills.²⁰ They saw that their army⁷ had been put to flight, and that the Jews⁷ were burning the camp, for the smoke that was seen showed what had happened.²¹ When they perceived this, they were greatly frightened, and when they also saw the army of Judas drawn up in the plain for battle,²² they all fled into the land of the Philistines.²³ Then Judas returned to plunder the camp, and they seized a great amount of gold and silver, and cloth dyed blue and sea purple, and great riches.²⁴ On their return they sang hymns and praises to Heaven—"For he is good, for his mercy endures forever."²⁵ Thus Israel had a great deliverance that day.

First Campaign of Lysias

26 Those of the foreigners who escaped went and reported to Lysias all that had happened.²⁷ When he heard it, he was perplexed and discouraged, for things had not happened to Israel as he had intended, nor had they turned out as the king had ordered.²⁸ But the next year he mustered sixty thousand picked infantry and five thousand cavalry to subdue them.²⁹ They came into Idumea and encamped at Bethzur, and Judas met them with ten thousand men.

30 When he saw that their army was strong, he prayed, saying, "Blessed are you, O Savior of Israel, who crushed the attack of the mighty warrior by the hand of your servant David, and gave the camp of the Philistines into the hands of Jonathan son of Saul, and of the man who carried his armor.³¹ Hem in this army by the hand of your people Israel, and let them be ashamed of their troops and their cavalry.³² Fill them with cowardice; melt the boldness of their strength; let them tremble in their destruction.³³ Strike them down with the sword of those who love you, and let all who know your name praise you with hymns."

34 Then both sides attacked, and there fell of the army of Lysias five thousand men;

they fell in action.^s ³⁵When Lysias saw the rout of his troops and observed the boldness that inspired those of Judas, and how ready they were either to live or to die nobly, he withdrew to Antioch and enlisted mercenaries in order to invade Judea again with an even larger army.

Cleansing and Dedication of the Temple

36 Then Judas and his brothers said, "See, our enemies are crushed; let us go up to cleanse the sanctuary and dedicate it." ³⁷So all the army assembled and went up to Mount Zion. ³⁸There they saw the sanctuary desolate, the altar profaned, and the gates burned. In the courts they saw bushes sprung up as in a thicket, or as on one of the mountains. They saw also the chambers of the priests in ruins. ³⁹Then they tore their clothes and mourned with great lamentation; they sprinkled themselves with ashes ⁴⁰and fell face down on the ground. And when the signal was given with the trumpets, they cried out to Heaven.

41 Then Judas detailed men to fight against those in the citadel until he had cleansed the sanctuary. ⁴²He chose blameless priests devoted to the law, ⁴³and they cleansed the sanctuary and removed the defiled stones to an unclean place. ⁴⁴They deliberated what to do about the altar of burnt offering, which had been profaned. ⁴⁵And they thought it best to tear it down, so that it would not be a lasting shame to them that the Gentiles had defiled it. So they tore down the altar, ⁴⁶and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill until a prophet should come to tell what to do with them. ⁴⁷Then they took unhewn stones, as the law directs, and built a new altar like the former one. ⁴⁸They also rebuilt the sanctuary and the interior of the temple, and consecrated the courts. ⁴⁹They made new holy vessels, and brought the lampstand, the altar of incense, and the table into the temple. ⁵⁰Then they offered incense on the altar and lit the lamps on the lampstand, and these gave light in the temple. ⁵¹They placed the bread on the table and hung up the curtains. Thus they finished all the work they had undertaken.

52 Early in the morning on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, which is the month of Chislev, in the one hundred forty-eighth year,^u ⁵³they rose and offered sacri-

fice, as the law directs, on the new altar of burnt offering that they had built. ⁵⁴At the very season and on the very day that the Gentiles had profaned it, it was dedicated with songs and harps and lutes and cymbals. ⁵⁵All the people fell on their faces and worshiped and blessed Heaven, who had prospered them. ⁵⁶So they celebrated the dedication of the altar for eight days, and joyfully offered burnt offerings; they offered a sacrifice of well-being and a thanksgiving offering. ⁵⁷They decorated the front of the temple with golden crowns and small shields; they restored the gates and the chambers for the priests, and fitted them with doors. ⁵⁸There was very great joy among the people, and the disgrace brought by the Gentiles was removed.

59 Then Judas and his brothers and all the assembly of Israel determined that every year at that season the days of dedication of the altar should be observed with joy and gladness for eight days, beginning with the twenty-fifth day of the month of Chislev.

60 At that time they fortified Mount Zion with high walls and strong towers all around, to keep the Gentiles from coming and trampling them down as they had done before. ⁶¹Judas^r stationed a garrison there to guard it; he also fortified Beth-zur to guard it, so that the people might have a stronghold that faced Idumea.

Wars with Neighboring Peoples

5 When the Gentiles all around heard that the altar had been rebuilt and the sanctuary dedicated as it was before, they became very angry, ²and they determined to destroy the descendants of Jacob who lived among them. So they began to kill and destroy among the people. ³But Judas made war on the descendants of Esau in Idumea, at Akrabattene, because they kept lying in wait for Israel. He dealt them a heavy blow and humbled them and despoiled them. ⁴He also remembered the wickedness of the sons of Baean, who were a trap and a snare to the people and ambushed them on the highways. ⁵They were shut up by him in their^w towers; and he encamped against them, vowed their complete destruction, and burned with fire their towers and all who were in them. ⁶Then he crossed over to attack the Ammonites, where he found a strong band and many people,

^s Or and some fell on the opposite side ^t Gk whole ^u 164 B.C. ^v Gk He ^w Gk her

with Timothy as their leader. ⁷He engaged in many battles with them, and they were crushed before him; he struck them down. ⁸He also took Jazer and its villages; then he returned to Judea.

Liberation of Galilean Jews

9 Now the Gentiles in Gilead gathered together against the Israelites who lived in their territory, and planned to destroy them. But they fled to the stronghold of Dathema, ¹⁰and sent to Judas and his brothers a letter that said, "The Gentiles around us have gathered together to destroy us. ¹¹They are preparing to come and capture the stronghold to which we have fled, and Timothy is leading their forces. ¹²Now then, come and rescue us from their hands, for many of us have fallen, ¹³and all our kindred who were in the land of Tob have been killed; the enemy^{*} have captured their wives and children and goods, and have destroyed about a thousand persons there."

14 While the letter was still being read, other messengers, with their garments torn, came from Galilee and made a similar report; ¹⁵they said that the people of Ptolemais and Tyre and Sidon, and all Galilee of the Gentiles,[†] had gathered together against them "to annihilate us." ¹⁶When Judas and the people heard these messages, a great assembly was called to determine what they should do for their kindred who were in distress and were being attacked by enemies.[‡] ¹⁷Then Judas said to his brother Simon, "Choose your men and go and rescue your kindred in Galilee; Jonathan my brother and I will go to Gilead." ¹⁸But he left Joseph, son of Zechariah, and Azariah, a leader of the people, with the rest of the forces, in Judea to guard it; ¹⁹and he gave them this command, "Take charge of this people, but do not engage in battle with the Gentiles until we return." ²⁰Then three thousand men were assigned to Simon to go to Galilee, and eight thousand to Judas for Gilead.

21 So Simon went to Galilee and fought many battles against the Gentiles, and the Gentiles were crushed before him. ²²He pursued them to the gate of Ptolemais; as many as three thousand of the Gentiles fell, and he despoiled them. ²³Then he took the Jews[‡] of Galilee and Arbatta, with their wives and children, and all they possessed, and led them to Judea with great rejoicing.

Judas and Jonathan in Gilead

24 Judas Maccabeus and his brother Jonathan crossed the Jordan and made three days' journey into the wilderness. ²⁵They encountered the Nabateans, who met them peaceably and told them all that had happened to their kindred in Gilead: ²⁶"Many of them have been shut up in Bozrah and Bosor, in Alema and Chaspho, Maked and Carnaim"—all these towns were strong and large— ²⁷and some have been shut up in the other towns of Gilead; the enemy^{*} are getting ready to attack the strongholds tomorrow and capture and destroy all these people in a single day."

28 Then Judas and his army quickly turned back by the wilderness road to Bozrah; and he took the town, and killed every male by the edge of the sword; then he seized all its spoils and burned it with fire. ²⁹He left the place at night, and they went all the way to the stronghold of Dathema.[†] ³⁰At dawn they looked out and saw a large company, which could not be counted, carrying ladders and engines of war to capture the stronghold, and attacking the Jews within.[‡] ³¹So Judas saw that the battle had begun and that the cry of the town went up to Heaven, with trumpets and loud shouts, ³²and he said to the men of his forces, "Fight today for your kindred!" ³³Then he came up behind them in three companies, who sounded their trumpets and cried aloud in prayer. ³⁴And when the army of Timothy realized that it was Maccabeus, they fled before him, and he dealt them a heavy blow. As many as eight thousand of them fell that day.

35 Next he turned aside to Maapha,[‡] and fought against it and took it; and he killed every male in it, plundered it, and burned it with fire. ³⁶From there he marched on and took Chaspho, Maked, and Bosor, and the other towns of Gilead.

37 After these things Timothy gathered another army and encamped opposite Raphon, on the other side of the stream. ³⁸Judas sent men to spy out the camp, and they reported to him, "All the Gentiles around us have gathered to him; it is a very large force. ³⁹They also have hired Arabs to help them, and they are encamped across the stream, ready to come and fight against you." And Judas went to meet them.

40 Now as Judas and his army drew

^{*} Gk *they* [†] Gk *aliens* [‡] Gk *them* [§] Gk *those* ^{||} Gk lacks of Dathema. See verse 9 [¶] Gk and they were attacking them [‡] Other ancient authorities read Alema

near to the stream of water. Timothy said to the officers of his forces, "If he crosses over to us first, we will not be able to resist him, for he will surely defeat us." ⁴¹But if he shows fear and camps on the other side of the river, we will cross over to him and defeat him." ⁴²When Judas approached the stream of water, he stationed the officers of the army at the stream and gave them this command, "Permit no one to encamp, but make them all enter the battle." ⁴³Then he crossed over against them first, and the whole army followed him. All the Gentiles were defeated before him, and they threw away their arms and fled into the sacred precincts at Carnaim. ⁴⁴But he took the town and burned the sacred precincts with fire, together with all who were in them. Thus Carnaim was conquered; they could stand before Judas no longer.

The Return to Jerusalem

⁴⁵ Then Judas gathered together all the Israelites in Gilead, the small and the great, with their wives and children and goods, a very large company, to go to the land of Judah. ⁴⁶So they came to Ephron. This was a large and very strong town on the road, and they could not go around it to the right or to the left; they had to go through it. ⁴⁷But the people of the town shut them out and blocked up the gates with stones.

⁴⁸ Judas sent them this friendly message, "Let us pass through your land to get to our land. No one will do you harm; we will simply pass by on foot." But they refused to open to him. ⁴⁹Then Judas ordered proclamation to be made to the army that all should encamp where they were. ⁵⁰So the men of the forces encamped, and he fought against the town all that day and all the night, and the town was delivered into his hands. ⁵¹He destroyed every male by the edge of the sword, and razed and plundered the town. Then he passed through the town over the bodies of the dead.

⁵² Then they crossed the Jordan into the large plain before Beth-shan. ⁵³Judas kept rallying the laggards and encouraging the people all the way until he came to the land of Judah. ⁵⁴So they went up to Mount Zion with joy and gladness, and offered burnt offerings, because they had returned in safety; not one of them had fallen.

Joseph and Azariah Defeated

⁵⁵ Now while Judas and Jonathan were in Gilead and their brother Simon was in Galilee before Ptolemais, ⁵⁶Joseph son of Zechariah, and Azariah, the commanders of the forces, heard of their brave deeds and of the heroic war they had fought. ⁵⁷So they said, "Let us also make a name for ourselves; let us go and make war on the Gentiles around us." ⁵⁸So they issued orders to the men of the forces that were with them and marched against Jamnia. ⁵⁹Gorgias and his men came out of the town to meet them in battle. ⁶⁰Then Joseph and Azariah were routed, and were pursued to the borders of Judea; as many as two thousand of the people of Israel fell that day. ⁶¹Thus the people suffered a great rout because, thinking to do a brave deed, they did not listen to Judas and his brothers. ⁶²But they did not belong to the family of those men through whom deliverance was given to Israel.

⁶³ The man Judas and his brothers were greatly honored in all Israel and among all the Gentiles, wherever their name was heard. ⁶⁴People gathered to them and praised them.

Success at Hebron and Philistia

⁶⁵ Then Judas and his brothers went out and fought the descendants of Esau in the land to the south. He struck Hebron and its villages and tore down its strongholds and burned its towers on all sides. ⁶⁶Then he marched off to go into the land of the Philistines, and passed through Marisa. ⁶⁷On that day some priests, who wished to do a brave deed, fell in battle, for they went out to battle unwisely. ⁶⁸But Judas turned aside to Azotus in the land of the Philistines; he tore down their altars, and the carved images of their gods he burned with fire; he plundered the towns and returned to the land of Judah.

The Last Days of Antiochus Epiphanes

6 King Antiochus was going through the upper provinces when he heard that Elymais in Persia was a city famed for its wealth in silver and gold. ²Its temple was very rich, containing golden shields, breastplates, and weapons left there by Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian king who first reigned over the Greeks. ³So he came and

^{*}Or scribes [†]Gk his [‡]Other ancient authorities read Samaria

tried to take the city and plunder it, but he could not because his plan had become known to the citizens ⁴and they withstood him in battle. So he fled and in great disappointment left there to return to Babylon.

5 Then someone came to him in Persia and reported that the armies that had gone into the land of Judah had been routed; ⁶that Lysias had gone first with a strong force, but had turned and fled before the Jews;⁷ that the Jews¹ had grown strong from the arms, supplies, and abundant spoils that they had taken from the armies they had cut down; ⁷that they had torn down the abomination that he had erected on the altar in Jerusalem; and that they had surrounded the sanctuary with high walls as before, and also Beth-zur, his town.

8 When the king heard this news, he was astounded and badly shaken. He took to his bed and became sick from disappointment, because things had not turned out for him as he had planned. ⁹He lay there for many days, because deep disappointment continually gripped him, and he realized that he was dying. ¹⁰So he called all his Friends and said to them, "Sleep has departed from my eyes and I am downhearted with worry. ¹¹I said to myself, 'To what distress I have come! And into what a great flood I now am plunged! For I was kind and beloved in my power.' ¹²But now I remember the wrong I did in Jerusalem. I seized all its vessels of silver and gold, and I sent to destroy the inhabitants of Judah without good reason. ¹³I know that it is because of this that these misfortunes have come upon me; here I am, perishing of bitter disappointment in a strange land."

14 Then he called for Philip, one of his Friends, and made him ruler over all his kingdom. ¹⁵He gave him the crown and his robe and the signet, so that he might guide his son Antiochus and bring him up to be king. ¹⁶Thus King Antiochus died there in the one hundred forty-ninth year.¹ ¹⁷When Lysias learned that the king was dead, he set up Antiochus the king's^k son to reign. Lysias¹ had brought him up from boyhood; he named him Eupator.

Renewed Attacks from Syria

18 Meanwhile the garrison in the citadel kept hemming Israel in around the sanctu-

ary. They were trying in every way to harm them and strengthen the Gentiles. ¹⁹Judas therefore resolved to destroy them, and assembled all the people to besiege them. ²⁰They gathered together and besieged the citadel^m in the one hundred fiftieth year;ⁿ and he built siege towers and other engines of war. ²¹But some of the garrison escaped from the siege and some of the ungodly Israelites joined them. ²²They went to the king and said, "How long will you fail to do justice and to avenge our kindred? ²³We were happy to serve your father, to live by what he said, and to follow his commands. ²⁴For this reason the sons of our people besieged the citadel^o and became hostile to us; moreover, they have put to death as many of us as they have caught, and they have seized our inheritances. ²⁵It is not against us alone that they have stretched out their hands; they have also attacked all the lands on their borders. ²⁶And see, today they have encamped against the citadel in Jerusalem to take it; they have fortified both the sanctuary and Beth-zur; ²⁷unless you quickly prevent them, they will do still greater things, and you will not be able to stop them."

28 The king was enraged when he heard this. He assembled all his Friends, the commanders of his forces and those in authority.^p ²⁹Mercenary forces also came to him from other kingdoms and from islands of the seas. ³⁰The number of his forces was one hundred thousand foot soldiers, twenty thousand horsemen, and thirty-two elephants accustomed to war. ³¹They came through Idumea and encamped against Beth-zur, and for many days they fought and built engines of war; but the Jews¹ sallied out and burned these with fire, and fought courageously.

The Battle at Beth-zechariah

32 Then Judas marched away from the citadel and encamped at Beth-zechariah, opposite the camp of the king. ³³Early in the morning the king set out and took his army by a forced march along the road to Beth-zechariah, and his troops made ready for battle and sounded their trumpets. ³⁴They offered the elephants the juice of grapes and mulberries, to arouse them for battle. ³⁵They distributed the animals among the pha-

^b Gk them ¹ Gk they ¹ 163 B.C. ^k Gk his ¹ Gk He ^m Gk it ⁿ 162 B.C. ^o Meaning of Gk uncertain ^p Gk those over the reins ^q Gk they

lanxes; with each elephant they stationed a thousand men armed with coats of mail, and with brass helmets on their heads; and five hundred picked horsemen were assigned to each beast. ³⁶These took their position beforehand wherever the animal was; wherever it went, they went with it, and they never left it. ³⁷On the elephants⁴ were wooden towers, strong and covered; they were fastened on each animal by special harness, and on each were four⁷ armed men who fought from there, and also its Indian driver. ³⁸The rest of the cavalry were stationed on either side, on the two flanks of the army, to harass the enemy while being themselves protected by the phalanxes. ³⁹When the sun shone on the shields of gold and brass, the hills were ablaze with them and gleamed like flaming torches.

40 Now a part of the king's army was spread out on the high hills, and some troops were on the plain, and they advanced steadily and in good order. ⁴¹All who heard the noise made by their multitude, by the marching of the multitude and the clanking of their arms, trembled, for the army was very large and strong. ⁴²But Judas and his army advanced to the battle, and six hundred of the king's army fell. ⁴³Now Eleazar, called Avaran, saw that one of the animals was equipped with royal armor. It was taller than all the others, and he supposed that the king was on it. ⁴⁴So he gave his life to save his people and to win for himself an everlasting name. ⁴⁵He courageously ran into the midst of the phalanx to reach it; he killed men right and left, and they parted before him on both sides. ⁴⁶He got under the elephant, stabbed it from beneath, and killed it; but it fell to the ground upon him and he died. ⁴⁷When the Jews⁵ saw the royal might and the fierce attack of the forces, they turned away in flight.

The Siege of the Temple

48 The soldiers of the king's army went up to Jerusalem against them, and the king encamped in Judea and at Mount Zion. ⁴⁹He made peace with the people of Beth-zur, and they evacuated the town because they had no provisions there to withstand a siege, since it was a sabbatical year for the land. ⁵⁰So the king took Beth-zur and sta-

tioned a guard there to hold it. ⁵¹Then he encamped before the sanctuary for many days. He set up siege towers, engines of war to throw fire and stones, machines to shoot arrows, and catapults. ⁵²The Jews⁶ also made engines of war to match theirs, and fought for many days. ⁵³But they had no food in storage,¹ because it was the seventh year; those who had found safety in Judea from the Gentiles had consumed the last of the stores. ⁵⁴Only a few men were left in the sanctuary; the rest scattered to their own homes, for the famine proved too much for them.

Syria Offers Terms

55 Then Lysias heard that Philip, whom King Antiochus while still living had appointed to bring up his son Antiochus to be king, ⁵⁶had returned from Persia and Media with the forces that had gone with the king, and that he was trying to seize control of the government. ⁵⁷So he quickly gave orders to withdraw, and said to the king, to the commanders of the forces, and to the troops, men, "Daily we grow weaker, our food supply is scant, the place against which we are fighting is strong, and the affairs of the kingdom press urgently on us. ⁵⁸Now then let us come to terms with these people, and make peace with them and with all their nation. ⁵⁹Let us agree to let them live by their laws as they did before; for it was on account of their laws that we abolished that they became angry and did all these things."

60 The speech pleased the king and the commanders, and he sent to the Jews⁹ an offer of peace, and they accepted it. ⁶¹So the king and the commanders gave them their oath. On these conditions the Jews⁹ evacuated the stronghold. ⁶²But when the king entered Mount Zion and saw what a strong fortress the place was, he broke the oath he had sworn and gave orders to tear down the wall all around. ⁶³Then he set off in haste and returned to Antioch. He found Philip in control of the city, but he fought against him, and took the city by force.

Expedition of Bacchides and Alcimus

7 In the one hundred fifty-first year¹⁰ Demetrius son of Seleucus set out from Rome, sailed with a few men to a town by

⁴ Gk them ⁷ Cn: Some authorities read thirty; others thirty-two ⁵ Gk they ⁶ Other ancient authorities read in the sanctuary ⁹ 161 B.C.

the sea, and there began to reign. ²As he was entering the royal palace of his ancestors, the army seized Antiochus and Lysias to bring them to him. ³But when this act became known to him, he said, "Do not let me see their faces!" ⁴So the army killed them, and Demetrius took his seat on the throne of his kingdom.

5 Then there came to him all the renegade and godless men of Israel; they were led by Alcimus, who wanted to be high priest. ⁶They brought to the king this accusation against the people: "Judas and his brothers have destroyed all your Friends, and have driven us out of our land. ⁷Now then send a man whom you trust; let him go and see all the ruin that Judas" has brought on us and on the land of the king, and let him punish them and all who help them."

8 So the king chose Bacchides, one of the king's Friends, governor of the province Beyond the River; he was a great man in the kingdom and was faithful to the king. ⁹He sent him, and with him he sent the ungodly Alcimus, whom he made high priest; and he commanded him to take vengeance on the Israelites. ¹⁰So they marched away and came with a large force into the land of Judah; and he sent messengers to Judas and his brothers with peaceable but treacherous words. ¹¹But they paid no attention to their words, for they saw that they had come with a large force.

12 Then a group of scribes appeared in a body before Alcimus and Bacchides to ask for just terms. ¹³The Hasideans were first among the Israelites to seek peace from them, ¹⁴for they said, "A priest of the line of Aaron has come with the army, and he will not harm us." ¹⁵Alcimus" spoke peaceable words to them and swore this oath to them, "We will not seek to injure you or your Friends." ¹⁶So they trusted him; but he seized sixty of them and killed them in one day, in accordance with the word that was written,

¹⁷ "The flesh of your faithful ones and their blood

they poured out all around Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them."

¹⁸Then the fear and dread of them fell on all the people, for they said, "There is no truth or justice in them, for they have violated the agreement and the oath that they swore."

19 Then Bacchides withdrew from Jerusalem and encamped in Beth-zait. And he sent and seized many of the men who had deserted to him,^{*} and some of the people, and killed them and threw them into a great pit. ²⁰He placed Alcimus in charge of the country and left with him a force to help him; then Bacchides went back to the king.

21 Alcimus struggled to maintain his high priesthood, ²²and all who were troubling their people joined him. They gained control of the land of Judah and did great damage in Israel. ²³And Judas saw all the wrongs that Alcimus and those with him had done among the Israelites; it was more than the Gentiles had done. ²⁴So Judas" went out into all the surrounding parts of Judea, taking vengeance on those who had deserted and preventing those in the city⁹ from going out into the country. ²⁵When Alcimus saw that Judas and those with him had grown strong, and realized that he could not withstand them, he returned to the king and brought malicious charges against them.

Nicanor in Judea

26 Then the king sent Nicanor, one of his honored princes, who hated and detested Israel, and he commanded him to destroy the people. ²⁷So Nicanor came to Jerusalem with a large force, and treacherously sent to Judas and his brothers this peaceable message, ²⁸"Let there be no fighting between you and me; I shall come with a few men to see you face to face in peace."

29 So he came to Judas, and they greeted one another peaceably; but the enemy were preparing to kidnap Judas. ³⁰It became known to Judas that Nicanor" had come to him with treacherous intent, and he was afraid of him and would not meet him again. ³¹When Nicanor learned that his plan had been disclosed, he went out to meet Judas in battle near Caphar-salama. ³²About five hundred of the army of Nicanor fell, and the rest² fled into the city of David.

Nicanor Threatens the Temple

33 After these events Nicanor went up to Mount Zion. Some of the priests from the sanctuary and some of the elders of the people came out to greet him peaceably and

^{*}Gk he ^{*}Gk He ²Or many of his men who had deserted ⁹Gk and they were prevented ²Gk they

to show him the burnt offering that was being offered for the king. ³⁴But he mocked them and derided them and defiled them and spoke arrogantly, ³⁵and in anger he swore this oath, "Unless Judas and his army are delivered into my hands this time, then if I return safely I will burn up this house." And he went out in great anger. ³⁶At this the priests went in and stood before the altar and the temple; they wept and said, ³⁷"You chose this house to be called by your name,

and to be for your people a house of prayer and supplication.

³⁸ Take vengeance on this man and on his army, and let them fall by the sword; remember their blasphemies, and let them live no longer."

The Death of Nicanor

³⁹ Now Nicanor went out from Jerusalem and encamped in Beth-horon, and the Syrian army joined him. ⁴⁰Judas encamped in Adasa with three thousand men. Then Judas prayed and said, ⁴¹"When the messengers from the king spoke blasphemy, your angel went out and struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians." ⁴²So also crush this army before us today; let the rest learn that Nicanor^b has spoken wickedly against the sanctuary, and judge him according to this wickedness."

⁴³ So the armies met in battle on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. The army of Nicanor was crushed, and he himself was the first to fall in the battle. ⁴⁴When his army saw that Nicanor had fallen, they threw down their arms and fled. ⁴⁵The Jews^c pursued them a day's journey, from Adasa as far as Gazara, and as they followed they kept sounding the battle call on the trumpets. ⁴⁶People came out of all the surrounding villages of Judea, and they outflanked the enemy^d and drove them back to their pursuers,^e so that they all fell by the sword; not even one of them was left. ⁴⁷Then the Jews^c seized the spoils and the plunder; they cut off Nicanor's head and the right hand that he had so arrogantly stretched out, and brought them and displayed them just outside Jerusalem. ⁴⁸The people rejoiced greatly and celebrated that day as a day of great gladness. ⁴⁹They decreed that this day

should be celebrated each year on the thirteenth day of Adar. ⁵⁰So the land of Judah had rest for a few days.

A Eulogy of the Romans

8 Now Judas heard of the fame of the Romans, that they were very strong and were well-disposed toward all who made an alliance with them, that they pledged friendship to those who came to them, ²and that they were very strong. He had been told of their wars and of the brave deeds that they were doing among the Gauls, how they had defeated them and forced them to pay tribute, ³and what they had done in the land of Spain to get control of the silver and gold mines there, ⁴and how they had gained control of the whole region by their planning and patience, even though the place was far distant from them. They also subdued the kings who came against them from the ends of the earth, until they crushed them and inflicted great disaster on them; the rest paid them tribute every year. ⁵They had crushed in battle and conquered Philip, and King Perseus of the Macedonians,^f and the others who rose up against them. ⁶They also had defeated Antiochus the Great, king of Asia, who went to fight against them with one hundred twenty elephants and with cavalry and chariots and a very large army. He was crushed by them; ⁷they took him alive and decreed that he and those who would reign after him should pay a heavy tribute and give hostages and surrender some of their best provinces, ⁸the countries of India, Media, and Lydia. These they took from him and gave to King Eumenes. ⁹The Greeks planned to come and destroy them, ¹⁰but this became known to them, and they sent a general against the Greeks^d and attacked them. Many of them were wounded and fell, and the Romans^c took captive their wives and children; they plundered them, conquered the land, tore down their strongholds, and enslaved them to this day. ¹¹The remaining kingdoms and islands, as many as ever opposed them, they destroyed and enslaved; ¹²but with their friends and those who rely on them they have kept friendship. They have subdued kings far and near, and as many as have heard of their fame have feared them. ¹³Those whom they wish to help and to make kings, they make kings, and those whom they wish

^a Gk of them ^b Gk he ^c Gk they ^d Gk them ^e Gk these ^f Or Kittim

they depose; and they have been greatly exalted. ¹⁴Yet for all this not one of them has put on a crown or worn purple as a mark of pride, ¹⁵but they have built for themselves a senate chamber, and every day three hundred twenty senators constantly deliberate concerning the people, to govern them well. ¹⁶They trust one man each year to rule over them and to control all their land; they all heed the one man, and there is no envy or jealousy among them.

An Alliance with Rome

17 So Judas chose Eupolemus son of John son of Accos, and Jason son of Eleazar, and sent them to Rome to establish friendship and alliance, ¹⁸and to free themselves from the yoke; for they saw that the kingdom of the Greeks was enslaving Israel completely. ¹⁹They went to Rome, a very long journey; and they entered the senate chamber and spoke as follows: ²⁰"Judas, who is also called Maccabeus, and his brothers and the people of the Jews have sent us to you to establish alliance and peace with you, so that we may be enrolled as your allies and friends." ²¹The proposal pleased them, ²²and this is a copy of the letter that they wrote in reply, on bronze tablets, and sent to Jerusalem to remain with them there as a memorial of peace and alliance:

23 "May all go well with the Romans and with the nation of the Jews at sea and on land forever, and may sword and enemy be far from them. ²⁴If war comes first to Rome or to any of their allies in all their dominion, ²⁵the nation of the Jews shall act as their allies wholeheartedly, as the occasion may indicate to them. ²⁶To the enemy that makes war they shall not give or supply grain, arms, money, or ships, just as Rome has decided; and they shall keep their obligations without receiving any return. ²⁷In the same way, if war comes first to the nation of the Jews, the Romans shall willingly act as their allies, as the occasion may indicate to them. ²⁸And to their enemies there shall not be given grain, arms, money, or ships, just as Rome has decided; and they shall keep these obligations and do so without deceit. ²⁹Thus on these terms the Romans make a treaty with the Jewish people. ³⁰If after these terms are in effect both parties shall determine to add or delete

anything, they shall do so at their discretion, and any addition or deletion that they may make shall be valid.

31 "Concerning the wrongs that King Demetrius is doing to them, we have written to him as follows, 'Why have you made your yoke heavy on our friends and allies the Jews?' ³²If now they appeal again for help against you, we will defend their rights and fight you on sea and on land.'"

Bacchides Returns to Judea

9 When Demetrius heard that Nicanor and his army had fallen in battle, he sent Bacchides and Alcimus into the land of Judah a second time, and with them the right wing of the army. ²They went by the road that leads to Gilgal and encamped against Mesaloth in Arbela, and they took it and killed many people. ³In the first month of the one hundred fifty-second year^a they encamped against Jerusalem; ⁴then they marched off and went to Berea with twenty thousand foot soldiers and two thousand cavalry.

5 Now Judas was encamped in Elasa, and with him were three thousand picked men. ⁶When they saw the huge number of the enemy forces, they were greatly frightened, and many slipped away from the camp, until no more than eight hundred of them were left.

7 When Judas saw that his army had slipped away and the battle was imminent, he was crushed in spirit, for he had no time to assemble them. ⁸He became faint, but he said to those who were left, "Let us get up and go against our enemies. We may have the strength to fight them." ⁹But they tried to dissuade him, saying, "We do not have the strength. Let us rather save our own lives now, and let us come back with our kindred and fight them; we are too few." ¹⁰But Judas said, "Far be it from us to do such a thing as to flee from them. If our time has come, let us die bravely for our kindred, and leave no cause to question our honor."

The Last Battle of Judas

11 Then the army of Bacchides^b marched out from the camp and took its stand for the encounter. The cavalry was divided into two companies, and the slingers and the

^a 160 B.C. ^b Gk the army

archers went ahead of the army, as did all the chief warriors. ¹²Bacchides was on the right wing. Flanked by the two companies, the phalanx advanced to the sound of the trumpets; and the men with Judas also blew their trumpets. ¹³The earth was shaken by the noise of the armies, and the battle raged from morning until evening.

¹⁴Judas saw that Bacchides and the strength of his army were on the right; then all the stouthearted men went with him, ¹⁵and they crushed the right wing, and he pursued them as far as Mount Azotus. ¹⁶When those on the left wing saw that the right wing was crushed, they turned and followed close behind Judas and his men. ¹⁷The battle became desperate, and many on both sides were wounded and fell. ¹⁸Judas also fell, and the rest fled.

¹⁹Then Jonathan and Simon took their brother Judas and buried him in the tomb of their ancestors at Modein, ²⁰and wept for him. All Israel made great lamentation for him; they mourned many days and said, ²¹"How is the mighty fallen, the savior of Israel!"

²²Now the rest of the acts of Judas, and his wars and the brave deeds that he did, and his greatness, have not been recorded, but they were very many.

Jonathan Succeeds Judas

²³After the death of Judas, the renegades emerged in all parts of Israel; all the wrongdoers reappeared. ²⁴In those days a very great famine occurred, and the country went over to their side. ²⁵Bacchides chose the godless and put them in charge of the country. ²⁶They made inquiry and searched for the friends of Judas, and brought them to Bacchides, who took vengeance on them and made sport of them. ²⁷So there was great distress in Israel, such as had not been since the time that prophets ceased to appear among them.

²⁸Then all the friends of Judas assembled and said to Jonathan, ²⁹"Since the death of your brother Judas there has been no one like him to go against our enemies and Bacchides, and to deal with those of our nation who hate us. ³⁰Now therefore we have chosen you today to take his place as our ruler and leader, to fight our battle."

³¹So Jonathan accepted the leadership at that time in place of his brother Judas.

The Campaigns of Jonathan

³²When Bacchides learned of this, he tried to kill him. ³³But Jonathan and his brother Simon and all who were with him heard of it, and they fled into the wilderness of Tekoa and camped by the water of the pool of Asphar. ³⁴Bacchides found this out on the sabbath day, and he with all his army crossed the Jordan.

³⁵So Jonathan¹ sent his brother as leader of the multitude and begged the Nabateans, who were his friends, for permission to store with them the great amount of baggage that they had. ³⁶But the family of Jambri from Medeba came out and seized John and all that he had, and left with it.

³⁷After these things it was reported to Jonathan and his brother Simon, "The family of Jambri are celebrating a great wedding, and are conducting the bride, a daughter of one of the great nobles of Canaan, from Nadabath with a large escort." ³⁸Remembering how their brother John had been killed, they went up and hid under cover of the mountain. ³⁹They looked out and saw a tumultuous procession with a great amount of baggage; and the bridegroom came out with his friends and his brothers to meet them with tambourines and musicians and many weapons. ⁴⁰Then they rushed on them from the ambush and began killing them. Many were wounded and fell, and the rest fled to the mountain; and the Jews¹ took all their goods. ⁴¹So the wedding was turned into mourning and the voice of their musicians into a funeral dirge. ⁴²After they had fully avenged the blood of their brother, they returned to the marshes of the Jordan.

⁴³When Bacchides heard of this, he came with a large force on the sabbath day to the banks of the Jordan. ⁴⁴And Jonathan said to those with him, "Let us get up now and fight for our lives, for today things are not as they were before. ⁴⁵For look! the battle is in front of us and behind us; the water of the Jordan is on this side and on that, with marsh and thicket; there is no place to turn. ⁴⁶Cry out now to Heaven that you may be delivered from the hands of our enemies." ⁴⁷So the battle began, and Jonathan stretched out his hand to strike Bacchides, but he eluded him and went to the rear. ⁴⁸Then Jonathan and the men with him leaped into the Jordan and swam across to the other side, and the enemy¹ did

¹Gk he ¹Gk they

not cross the Jordan to attack them. ⁴⁹And about one thousand of Bacchides' men fell that day.

Bacchides Builds Fortifications

50 Then Bacchides^a returned to Jerusalem and built strong cities in Judea: the fortress in Jericho, and Emmaus, and Beth-horon, and Bethel, and Timnath, and¹ Pharathon, and Tephon, with high walls and gates and bars. ⁵¹And he placed garrisons in them to harass Israel. ⁵²He also fortified the town of Beth-zur, and Gazara, and the citadel, and in them he put troops and stores of food. ⁵³And he took the sons of the leading men of the land as hostages and put them under guard in the citadel at Jerusalem.

54 In the one hundred and fifty-third year,^m in the second month, Alcimus gave orders to tear down the wall of the inner court of the sanctuary. He tore down the work of the prophets! ⁵⁵But he only began to tear it down, for at that time Alcimus was stricken and his work was hindered; his mouth was stopped and he was paralyzed, so that he could no longer say a word or give commands concerning his house. ⁵⁶And Alcimus died at that time in great agony. ⁵⁷When Bacchides saw that Alcimus was dead, he returned to the king, and the land of Judah had rest for two years.

The End of the War

58 Then all the lawless plotted and said, "See! Jonathan and his men are living in quiet and confidence. So now let us bring Bacchides back, and he will capture them all in one night." ⁵⁹And they went and consulted with him. ⁶⁰He started to come with a large force, and secretly sent letters to all his allies in Judea, telling them to seize Jonathan and his men; but they were unable to do it, because their plan became known. ⁶¹And Jonathan's menⁿ seized about fifty of the men of the country who were leaders in this treachery, and killed them.

62 Then Jonathan with his men, and Simon, withdrew to Bethbasi in the wilderness; he rebuilt the parts of it that had been demolished, and they fortified it. ⁶³When Bacchides learned of this, he assembled all his forces, and sent orders to the men of

Judea. ⁶⁴Then he came and encamped against Bethbasi; he fought against it for many days and made machines of war.

65 But Jonathan left his brother Simon in the town, while he went out into the country; and he went with only a few men. ⁶⁶He struck down Odomera and his kindred and the people of Phasiron in their tents. ⁶⁷Then he^o began to attack and went into battle with his forces; and Simon and his men sallied out from the town and set fire to the machines of war. ⁶⁸They fought with Bacchides, and he was crushed by them. They pressed him very hard, for his plan and his expedition had been in vain. ⁶⁹So he was very angry at the renegades who had counseled him to come into the country, and he killed many of them. Then he decided to go back to his own land.

70 When Jonathan learned of this, he sent ambassadors to him to make peace with him and obtain release of the captives. ⁷¹He agreed, and did as he said; and he swore to Jonathan^p that he would not try to harm him as long as he lived. ⁷²He restored to him the captives whom he had taken previously from the land of Judah; then he turned and went back to his own land, and did not come again into their territory. ⁷³Thus the sword ceased from Israel. Jonathan settled in Michmash and began to judge the people; and he destroyed the godless out of Israel.

Revolt of Alexander Epiphanes

10 In the one hundred sixtieth year^q Alexander Epiphanes, son of Antiochus, landed and occupied Ptolemais. They welcomed him, and there he began to reign. ²When King Demetrius heard of it, he assembled a very large army and marched out to meet him in battle. ³Demetrius sent Jonathan a letter in peaceable words to honor him; ⁴for he said to himself, "Let us act first to make peace with him^r before he makes peace with Alexander against us. ⁵for he will remember all the wrongs that we did to him and to his brothers and his nation." ⁶So Demetrius^s gave him authority to recruit troops, to equip them with arms, and to become his ally; and he commanded that the hostages in the citadel should be released to him.

7 Then Jonathan came to Jerusalem and

^a Gk he ¹ Some authorities omit and ^m 159 B.C. ⁿ Gk they ^o Other ancient authorities read they ^p Gk him ^q 152 B.C. ^r Gk them

read the letter in the hearing of all the people and of those in the citadel. ⁸They were greatly alarmed when they heard that the king had given him authority to recruit troops. ⁹But those in the citadel released the hostages to Jonathan, and he returned them to their parents.

10 And Jonathan took up residence in Jerusalem and began to rebuild and restore the city. ¹¹He directed those who were doing the work to build the walls and encircle Mount Zion with squared stones, for better fortification; and they did so.

12 Then the foreigners who were in the strongholds that Bacchides had built fled; ¹³all of them left their places and went back to their own lands. ¹⁴Only in Beth-zur did some remain who had forsaken the law and the commandments, for it served as a place of refuge.

15 Now King Alexander heard of all the promises that Demetrius had sent to Jonathan, and he heard of the battles that Jonathan¹ and his brothers had fought, of the brave deeds that they had done, and of the troubles that they had endured. ¹⁶So he said, "Shall we find another such man? Come now, we will make him our friend and ally." ¹⁷And he wrote a letter and sent it to him, in the following words:

Jonathan Becomes High Priest

18 "King Alexander to his brother Jonathan, greetings. ¹⁹We have heard about you, that you are a mighty warrior and worthy to be our friend. ²⁰And so we have appointed you today to be the high priest of your nation; you are to be called the king's Friend and you are to take our side and keep friendship with us." He also sent him a purple robe and a golden crown.

21 So Jonathan put on the sacred vestments in the seventh month of the one hundred sixtieth year;¹ at the festival of booths,² and he recruited troops and equipped them with arms in abundance. ²²When Demetrius heard of these things he was distressed and said, ²³"What is this that we have done? Alexander has gotten ahead of us in forming a friendship with the Jews to strengthen himself. ²⁴I also will write them words of encouragement and promise them honor and gifts, so that I may have their help." ²⁵So he sent a message to them in the following words:

A Letter from Demetrius to Jonathan

"King Demetrius to the nation of the Jews, greetings. ²⁶Since you have kept your agreement with us and have continued your friendship with us, and have not sided with our enemies, we have heard of it and rejoiced. ²⁷Now continue still to keep faith with us, and we will repay you with good for what you do for us. ²⁸We will grant you many immunities and give you gifts.

29 "I now free you and exempt all the Jews from payment of tribute and salt tax and crown levies, ³⁰and instead of collecting the third of the grain and the half of the fruit of the trees that I should receive, I release them from this day and henceforth. I will not collect them from the land of Judah or from the three districts added to it from Samaria and Galilee, from this day and for all time. ³¹Jerusalem and its environs, its tithes and its revenues, shall be holy and free from tax. ³²I release also my control of the citadel in Jerusalem and give it to the high priest, so that he may station in it men of his own choice to guard it. ³³And everyone of the Jews taken as a captive from the land of Judah into any part of my kingdom, I set free without payment; and let all officials cancel also the taxes on their livestock.

34 "All the festivals and sabbaths and new moons and appointed days, and the three days before a festival and the three after a festival—let them all be days of immunity and release for all the Jews who are in my kingdom. ³⁵No one shall have authority to exact anything from them or annoy any of them about any matter.

36 "Let Jews be enrolled in the king's forces to the number of thirty thousand men, and let the maintenance be given them that is due to all the forces of the king. ³⁷Let some of them be stationed in the great strongholds of the king, and let some of them be put in positions of trust in the kingdom. Let their officers and leaders be of their own number, and let them live by their own laws, just as the king has commanded in the land of Judah.

38 "As for the three districts that have been added to Judea from the country of Samaria, let them be annexed to Judea so that they may be considered to be under one ruler and obey no other authority than the high priest. ³⁹Ptolemais and the land adjoining it I have given as a gift to the

¹Gk he ¹152 B.C. ²Or *tabernacles*

sanctuary in Jerusalem, to meet the necessary expenses of the sanctuary. ⁴⁰I also grant fifteen thousand shekels of silver yearly out of the king's revenues from appropriate places. ⁴¹And all the additional funds that the government officials have not paid as they did in the first years,* they shall give from now on for the service of the temple.^w

⁴²Moreover, the five thousand shekels of silver that my officials^v have received every year from the income of the services of the temple, this too is canceled, because it belongs to the priests who minister there.

⁴³And all who take refuge at the temple in Jerusalem, or in any of its precincts, because they owe money to the king or are in debt, let them be released and receive back all their property in my kingdom.

44 "Let the cost of rebuilding and restoring the structures of the sanctuary be paid from the revenues of the king. ⁴⁵And let the cost of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and fortifying it all around, and the cost of rebuilding the walls in Judea, also be paid from the revenues of the king."

Death of Demetrius

46 When Jonathan and the people heard these words, they did not believe or accept them, because they remembered the great wrongs that Demetrius^u had done in Israel and how much he had oppressed them. ⁴⁷They favored Alexander, because he had been the first to speak peaceable words to them, and they remained his allies all his days.

48 Now King Alexander assembled large forces and encamped opposite Demetrius.

⁴⁹The two kings met in battle, and the army of Demetrius fled, and Alexander^z pursued him and defeated them. ⁵⁰He pressed the battle strongly until the sun set, and on that day Demetrius fell.

Treaty of Ptolemy and Alexander

51 Then Alexander sent ambassadors to Ptolemy king of Egypt with the following message: ⁵²"Since I have returned to my kingdom and have taken my seat on the throne of my ancestors, and established my rule—for I crushed Demetrius and gained control of our country; ⁵³I met him in battle, and he and his army were crushed by us,

and we have taken our seat on the throne of his kingdom—⁵⁴now therefore let us establish friendship with one another; give me now your daughter as my wife, and I will become your son-in-law, and will make gifts to you and to her in keeping with your position."

55 Ptolemy the king replied and said, "Happy was the day on which you returned to the land of your ancestors and took your seat on the throne of their kingdom. ⁵⁶And now I will do for you as you wrote, but meet me at Ptolemais, so that we may see one another, and I will become your father-in-law, as you have said."

57 So Ptolemy set out from Egypt, he and his daughter Cleopatra, and came to Ptolemais in the one hundred sixty-second year.^a ⁵⁸King Alexander met him, and Ptolemy^b gave him his daughter Cleopatra in marriage, and celebrated her wedding at Ptolemais with great pomp, as kings do.

59 Then King Alexander wrote to Jonathan to come and meet him. ⁶⁰So he went with pomp to Ptolemais and met the two kings; he gave them and their Friends silver and gold and many gifts, and found favor with them. ⁶¹A group of malcontents from Israel, renegades, gathered together against him to accuse him; but the king paid no attention to them. ⁶²The king gave orders to take off Jonathan's garments and to clothe him in purple, and they did so. ⁶³The king also seated him at his side; and he said to his officers, "Go out with him into the middle of the city and proclaim that no one is to bring charges against him about any matter, and let no one annoy him for any reason." ⁶⁴When his accusers saw the honor that was paid him, in accord with the proclamation, and saw him clothed in purple, they all fled. ⁶⁵Thus the king honored him and enrolled him among his chief^c Friends, and made him general and governor of the province. ⁶⁶And Jonathan returned to Jerusalem in peace and gladness.

Apollonius Is Defeated by Jonathan

67 In the one hundred sixty-fifth year^d Demetrius son of Demetrius came from Crete to the land of his ancestors. ⁶⁸When King Alexander heard of it, he was greatly distressed and returned to Antioch. ⁶⁹And Demetrius appointed Apollonius the gover-

* Meaning of Gk uncertain ^w Gk house ^x Gk they ^y Gk he ^z Other ancient authorities read *Alexander fled, and Demetrius* ^a 150 B.C. ^b Gk first ^c 147 B.C.

nor of Coelesyria, and he assembled a large force and encamped against Jamnia. Then he sent the following message to the high priest Jonathan:

70 "You are the only one to rise up against us, and I have fallen into ridicule and disgrace because of you. Why do you assume authority against us in the hill country? ⁷¹If you now have confidence in your forces, come down to the plain to meet us, and let us match strength with each other there, for I have with me the power of the cities. ⁷²Ask and learn who I am and who the others are that are helping us. People will tell you that you cannot stand before us, for your ancestors were twice put to flight in their own land. ⁷³And now you will not be able to withstand my cavalry and such an army in the plain, where there is no stone or pebble, or place to flee."

74 When Jonathan heard the words of Apollonius, his spirit was aroused. He chose ten thousand men and set out from Jerusalem, and his brother Simon met him to help him. ⁷⁵He encamped before Joppa, but the people of the city closed its gates, for Apollonius had a garrison in Joppa. ⁷⁶So they fought against it, and the people of the city became afraid and opened the gates, and Jonathan gained possession of Joppa.

77 When Apollonius heard of it, he mustered three thousand cavalry and a large army, and went to Azotus as though he were going farther. At the same time he advanced into the plain, for he had a large troop of cavalry and put confidence in it. ⁷⁸Jonathan^d pursued him to Azotus, and the armies engaged in battle. ⁷⁹Now Apollonius had secretly left a thousand cavalry behind them. ⁸⁰Jonathan learned that there was an ambush behind him, for they surrounded his army and shot arrows at his men from early morning until late afternoon. ⁸¹But his men stood fast, as Jonathan had commanded, and the enemy's^c horses grew tired.

82 Then Simon brought forward his force and engaged the phalanx in battle (for the cavalry was exhausted); they were overwhelmed by him and fled, ⁸³and the cavalry was dispersed in the plain. They fled to Azotus and entered Beth-dagon, the temple of their idol, for safety. ⁸⁴But Jonathan burned Azotus and the surrounding towns and plundered them; and the temple of Dagon, and those who had taken refuge in it, he burned with fire. ⁸⁵The number of those

who fell by the sword, with those burned alive, came to eight thousand.

86 Then Jonathan left there and encamped against Askalon, and the people of the city came out to meet him with great pomp.

87 He and those with him then returned to Jerusalem with a large amount of booty. ⁸⁸When King Alexander heard of these things, he honored Jonathan still more; ⁸⁹and he sent to him a golden buckle, such as it is the custom to give to the King's Kinsmen. He also gave him Ekron and all its environs as his possession.

Ptolemy Invades Syria

11 Then the king of Egypt gathered great forces, like the sand by the seashore, and many ships; and he tried to get possession of Alexander's kingdom by trickery and add it to his own kingdom. ²He set out for Syria with peaceable words, and the people of the towns opened their gates to him and went to meet him, for King Alexander had commanded them to meet him, since he was Alexander's^f father-in-law. ³But when Ptolemy entered the towns he stationed forces as a garrison in each town.

4 When he^g approached Azotus, they showed him the burnt-out temple of Dagon, and Azotus and its suburbs destroyed, and the corpses lying about, and the charred bodies of those whom Jonathan^d had burned in the war, for they had piled them in heaps along his route. ⁵They also told the king what Jonathan had done, to throw blame on him; but the king kept silent. ⁶Jonathan met the king at Joppa with pomp, and they greeted one another and spent the night there. ⁷And Jonathan went with the king as far as the river called Eleutherus; then he returned to Jerusalem.

8 So King Ptolemy gained control of the coastal cities as far as Seleucia by the sea, and he kept devising wicked designs against Alexander. ⁹He sent envoys to King Demetrius, saying, "Come, let us make a covenant with each other, and I will give you in marriage my daughter who was Alexander's wife, and you shall reign over your father's kingdom. ¹⁰I now regret that I gave him my daughter, for he has tried to kill me." ¹¹He threw blame on Alexander^h because he coveted his kingdom. ¹²So he

^dGk he ^eGk their ^fGk his ^gOther ancient authorities read they ^hGk him

took his daughter away from him and gave her to Demetrius. He was estranged from Alexander, and their enmity became manifest.

13 Then Ptolemy entered Antioch and put on the crown of Asia. Thus he put two crowns on his head, the crown of Egypt and that of Asia. 14 Now King Alexander was in Cilicia at that time, because the people of that region were in revolt. 15 When Alexander heard of it, he came against him in battle. Ptolemy marched out and met him with a strong force, and put him to flight. 16 So Alexander fled into Arabia to find protection there, and King Ptolemy was triumphant. 17 Zabdiel the Arab cut off the head of Alexander and sent it to Ptolemy. 18 But King Ptolemy died three days later, and his troops in the strongholds were killed by the inhabitants of the strongholds. 19 So Demetrius became king in the one hundred sixty-seventh year.¹

Jonathan's Diplomacy

20 In those days Jonathan assembled the Judeans to attack the citadel in Jerusalem, and he built many engines of war to use against it. 21 But certain renegades who hated their nation went to the king and reported to him that Jonathan was besieging the citadel. 22 When he heard this he was angry, and as soon as he heard it he set out and came to Ptolemais; and he wrote Jonathan not to continue the siege, but to meet him for a conference at Ptolemais as quickly as possible.

23 When Jonathan heard this, he gave orders to continue the siege. He chose some of the elders of Israel and some of the priests, and put himself in danger, 24 for he went to the king at Ptolemais, taking silver and gold and clothing and numerous other gifts. And he won his favor. 25 Although certain renegades of his nation kept making complaints against him, 26 the king treated him as his predecessors had treated him; he exalted him in the presence of all his Friends. 27 He confirmed him in the high priesthood and in as many other honors as he had formerly had, and caused him to be reckoned among his chief¹ Friends. 28 Then Jonathan asked the king to free Judea and the three districts of Samaria² from tribute, and promised him three hundred talents.

29 The king consented, and wrote a letter to Jonathan about all these things; its contents were as follows:

30 "King Demetrius to his brother Jonathan and to the nation of the Jews, greetings. 31 This copy of the letter that we wrote concerning you to our kinsman Lasthenes we have written to you also, so that you may know what it says. 32 King Demetrius to his father Lasthenes, greetings. 33 We have determined to do good to the nation of the Jews, who are our friends and fulfill their obligations to us, because of the goodwill they show toward us. 34 We have confirmed as their possession both the territory of Judea and the three districts of Aphairema and Lydda and Rathamin; the latter, with all the region bordering them, were added to Judea from Samaria. To all those who offer sacrifice in Jerusalem we have granted release from¹ the royal taxes that the king formerly received from them each year, from the crops of the land and the fruit of the trees. 35 And the other payments henceforth due to us of the tithes, and the taxes due to us, and the salt pits and the crown taxes due to us—from all these we shall grant them release. 36 And not one of these grants shall be canceled from this time on forever. 37 Now therefore take care to make a copy of this, and let it be given to Jonathan and put up in a conspicuous place on the holy mountain.' "

The Intrigue of Trypho

38 When King Demetrius saw that the land was quiet before him and that there was no opposition to him, he dismissed all his troops, all of them to their own homes, except the foreign troops that he had recruited from the islands of the nations. So all the troops who had served under his predecessors hated him. 39 A certain Trypho had formerly been one of Alexander's supporters; he saw that all the troops were grumbling against Demetrius. So he went to Imalkue the Arab, who was bringing up Antiochus, the young son of Alexander, 40 and insistently urged him to hand Antiochus^m over to him, to become king in place of his father. He also reported to Imalkue^m what Demetrius had done and told of the hatred that the troops of Demetriusⁿ had for him; and he stayed there many days.

¹ 145 B.C. ¹ Gk first ² Cn: Gk the three districts and Samaria ¹ Or Samaria, for all those who offer sacrifice in Jerusalem, in place of ^m Gk him ⁿ Gk his troops

41 Now Jonathan sent to King Demetrius the request that he remove the troops of the citadel from Jerusalem, and the troops in the strongholds; for they kept fighting against Israel. ⁴²And Demetrius sent this message back to Jonathan: "Not only will I do these things for you and your nation, but I will confer great honor on you and your nation, if I find an opportunity. ⁴³Now then you will do well to send me men who will help me, for all my troops have revolted." ⁴⁴So Jonathan sent three thousand stalwart men to him at Antioch, and when they came to the king, the king rejoiced at their arrival.

45 Then the people of the city assembled within the city, to the number of a hundred and twenty thousand, and they wanted to kill the king. ⁴⁶But the king fled into the palace. Then the people of the city seized the main streets of the city and began to fight. ⁴⁷So the king called the Jews to his aid, and they all rallied around him and then spread out through the city; and they killed on that day about one hundred thousand. ⁴⁸They set fire to the city and seized a large amount of spoil on that day, and saved the king. ⁴⁹When the people of the city saw that the Jews had gained control of the city as they pleased, their courage failed and they cried out to the king with this entreaty: ⁵⁰"Grant us peace, and make the Jews stop fighting against us and our city." ⁵¹And they threw down their arms and made peace. So the Jews gained glory in the sight of the king and of all the people in his kingdom, and they returned to Jerusalem with a large amount of spoil.

52 So King Demetrius sat on the throne of his kingdom, and the land was quiet before him. ⁵³But he broke his word about all that he had promised; he became estranged from Jonathan and did not repay the favors that Jonathan^o had done him, but treated him very harshly.

Trypho Seizes Power

54 After this Trypho returned, and with him the young boy Antiochus who began to reign and put on the crown. ⁵⁵All the troops that Demetrius had discharged gathered around him; they fought against Demetrius,^p and he fled and was routed. ⁵⁶Trypho captured the elephants^q and gained control of Antioch. ⁵⁷Then the young Antiochus wrote to Jonathan, saying, "I

confirm you in the high priesthood and set you over the four districts and make you one of the king's Friends." ⁵⁸He also sent him gold plate and a table service, and granted him the right to drink from gold cups and dress in purple and wear a gold buckle. ⁵⁹He appointed Jonathan's^r brother Simon governor from the Ladder of Tyre to the borders of Egypt.

Campaigns of Jonathan and Simon

60 Then Jonathan set out and traveled beyond the river and among the towns, and all the army of Syria gathered to him as allies. When he came to Askalon, the people of the city met him and paid him honor. ⁶¹From there he went to Gaza, but the people of Gaza shut him out. So he besieged it and burned its suburbs with fire and plundered them. ⁶²Then the people of Gaza pleaded with Jonathan, and he made peace with them, and took the sons of their rulers as hostages and sent them to Jerusalem. And he passed through the country as far as Damascus.

63 Then Jonathan heard that the officers of Demetrius had come to Kadesh in Galilee with a large army, intending to remove him from office. ⁶⁴He went to meet them, but left his brother Simon in the country. ⁶⁵Simon encamped before Beth-zur and fought against it for many days and hemmed it in. ⁶⁶Then they asked him to grant them terms of peace, and he did so. He removed them from there, took possession of the town, and set a garrison over it.

67 Jonathan and his army encamped by the waters of Gennesaret. Early in the morning they marched to the plain of Hazor, ⁶⁸and there in the plain the army of the foreigners met him; they had set an ambush against him in the mountains, but they themselves met him face to face. ⁶⁹Then the men in ambush emerged from their places and joined battle. ⁷⁰All the men with Jonathan fled; not one of them was left except Mattathias son of Absalom and Judas son of Chalphi, commanders of the forces of the army. ⁷¹Jonathan tore his clothes, put dust on his head, and prayed. ⁷²Then he turned back to the battle against the enemy^s and routed them, and they fled. ⁷³When his men who were fleeing saw this, they returned to him and joined him in the pursuit as far as Kadesh, to their camp, and there

^o Gk he ^p Gk him ^q Gk animals ^r Gk his ^s Gk them

they encamped. ⁷⁴As many as three thousand of the foreigners fell that day. And Jonathan returned to Jerusalem.

Alliances with Rome and Sparta

12 Now when Jonathan saw that the time was favorable for him, he chose men and sent them to Rome to confirm and renew the friendship with them. ²He also sent letters to the same effect to the Spartans and to other places. ³So they went to Rome and entered the senate chamber and said, "The high priest Jonathan and the Jewish nation have sent us to renew the former friendship and alliance with them." ⁴And the Romans¹ gave them letters to the people in every place, asking them to provide for the envoys² safe conduct to the land of Judah.

5 This is a copy of the letter that Jonathan wrote to the Spartans: ⁶"The high priest Jonathan, the senate of the nation, the priests, and the rest of the Jewish people to their brothers the Spartans, greetings. ⁷Already in time past a letter was sent to the high priest Onias from Arius," who was king among you, stating that you are our brothers, as the appended copy shows. ⁸Onias welcomed the envoy with honor, and received the letter, which contained a clear declaration of alliance and friendship. ⁹Therefore, though we have no need of these things, since we have as encouragement the holy books that are in our hands, ¹⁰we have undertaken to send to renew our family ties and friendship with you, so that we may not become estranged from you, for considerable time has passed since you sent your letter to us. ¹¹We therefore remember you constantly on every occasion, both at our festivals and on other appropriate days, at the sacrifices that we offer and in our prayers, as it is right and proper to remember brothers. ¹²And we rejoice in your glory. ¹³But as for ourselves, many trials and many wars have encircled us; the kings around us have waged war against us. ¹⁴We were unwilling to annoy you and our other allies and friends with these wars, ¹⁵for we have the help that comes from Heaven for our aid, and so we were delivered from our enemies, and our enemies were humbled. ¹⁶We therefore have chosen Numenius son of Antiochus and Antipater son of Jason, and have sent them to Rome to renew our

former friendship and alliance with them. ¹⁷We have commanded them to go also to you and greet you and deliver to you this letter from us concerning the renewal of our family ties. ¹⁸And now please send us a reply to this."

19 This is a copy of the letter that they sent to Onias: ²⁰"King Arius of the Spartans, to the high priest Onias, greetings. ²¹It has been found in writing concerning the Spartans and the Jews that they are brothers and are of the family of Abraham. ²²And now that we have learned this, please write us concerning your welfare; ²³we on our part write to you that your livestock and your property belong to us, and ours belong to you. We therefore command that our envoys¹ report to you accordingly."

Further Campaigns of Jonathan and Simon

24 Now Jonathan heard that the commanders of Demetrius had returned, with a larger force than before, to wage war against him. ²⁵So he marched away from Jerusalem and met them in the region of Hamath, for he gave them no opportunity to invade his own country. ²⁶He sent spies to their camp, and they returned and reported to him that the enemy¹ were being drawn up in formation to attack the Jews² by night. ²⁷So when the sun had set, Jonathan commanded his troops to be alert and to keep their arms at hand so as to be ready all night for battle, and he stationed outposts around the camp. ²⁸When the enemy heard that Jonathan and his troops were prepared for battle, they were afraid and were terrified at heart; so they kindled fires in their camp and withdrew.³ ²⁹But Jonathan and his troops did not know it until morning, for they saw the fires burning. ³⁰Then Jonathan pursued them, but he did not overtake them, for they had crossed the Eleutherus river. ³¹So Jonathan turned aside against the Arabs who are called Zabadeans, and he crushed them and plundered them. ³²Then he broke camp and went to Damascus, and marched through all that region.

33 Simon also went out and marched through the country as far as Askalon and the neighboring strongholds. He turned aside to Joppa and took it by surprise, ³⁴for he had heard that they were ready to hand over the stronghold to those whom Demetrius had sent. And he stationed a garrison there to guard it.

¹ Gk they ² Gk them ³ Vg Compare verse 20: Gk Darius ⁴ Other ancient authorities omit and withdrew

35 When Jonathan returned he convened the elders of the people and planned with them to build strongholds in Judea, ³⁶to build the walls of Jerusalem still higher, and to erect a high barrier between the citadel and the city to separate it from the city, in order to isolate it so that its garrison^{*} could neither buy nor sell. ³⁷So they gathered together to rebuild the city; part of the wall on the valley to the east had fallen, and he repaired the section called Chapphenatha. ³⁸Simon also built Adida in the Shephelah; he fortified it and installed gates with bolts.

perished along with his men, and they encouraged one another and kept marching in close formation, ready for battle. ⁵¹When their pursuers saw that they would fight for their lives, they turned back. ⁵²So they all reached the land of Judah safely, and they mourned for Jonathan and his companions and were in great fear; and all Israel mourned deeply. ⁵³All the nations around them tried to destroy them, for they said, "They have no leader or helper. Now therefore let us make war on them and blot out the memory of them from humankind."

Trypho Captures Jonathan

39 Then Trypho attempted to become king in Asia and put on the crown, and to raise his hand against King Antiochus. ⁴⁰He feared that Jonathan might not permit him to do so, but might make war on him, so he kept seeking to seize and kill him, and he marched out and came to Beth-shan. ⁴¹Jonathan went out to meet him with forty thousand picked warriors, and he came to Beth-shan. ⁴²When Trypho saw that he had come with a large army, he was afraid to raise his hand against him. ⁴³So he received him with honor and commended him to all his Friends, and he gave him gifts and commanded his Friends and his troops to obey him as they would himself. ⁴⁴Then he said to Jonathan, "Why have you put all these people to so much trouble when we are not at war? ⁴⁵Dismiss them now to their homes and choose for yourself a few men to stay with you, and come with me to Ptolemais. I will hand it over to you as well as the other strongholds and the remaining troops and all the officials, and will turn around and go home. For that is why I am here."

46 Jonathan^{*} trusted him and did as he said; he sent away the troops, and they returned to the land of Judah. ⁴⁷He kept with himself three thousand men, two thousand of whom he left in Galilee, while one thousand accompanied him. ⁴⁸But when Jonathan entered Ptolemais, the people of Ptolemais closed the gates and seized him, and they killed with the sword all who had entered with him.

49 Then Trypho sent troops and cavalry into Galilee and the Great Plain to destroy all Jonathan's soldiers. ⁵⁰But they realized that Jonathan had been seized and had

Simon Takes Command

13 Simon heard that Trypho had assembled a large army to invade the land of Judah and destroy it, ²and he saw that the people were trembling with fear. So he went up to Jerusalem, and gathering the people together ³he encouraged them, saying to them, "You yourselves know what great things my brothers and I and the house of my father have done for the laws and the sanctuary; you know also the wars and the difficulties that my brothers and I have seen. ⁴By reason of this all my brothers have perished for the sake of Israel, and I alone am left. ⁵And now, far be it from me to spare my life in any time of distress, for I am not better than my brothers. ⁶But I will avenge my nation and the sanctuary and your wives and children, for all the nations have gathered together out of hatred to destroy us."

7 The spirit of the people was rekindled when they heard these words, ⁸and they answered in a loud voice, "You are our leader in place of Judas and your brother Jonathan. ⁹Fight our battles, and all that you say to us we will do." ¹⁰So he assembled all the warriors and hurried to complete the walls of Jerusalem, and he fortified it on every side. ¹¹He sent Jonathan son of Absalom to Joppa, and with him a considerable army; he drove out its occupants and remained there.

Deceit and Treachery of Trypho

12 Then Trypho left Ptolemais with a large army to invade the land of Judah, and Jonathan was with him under guard. ¹³Simon encamped in Adida, facing the plain. ¹⁴Trypho learned that Simon had risen up

* Gk they * Gk he

in place of his brother Jonathan, and that he was about to join battle with him, so he sent envoys to him and said, ¹⁵"It is for the money that your brother Jonathan owed the royal treasury, in connection with the offices he held, that we are detaining him. ¹⁶Send now one hundred talents of silver and two of his sons as hostages, so that when released he will not revolt against us, and we will release him."

17 Simon knew that they were speaking deceitfully to him, but he sent to get the money and the sons, so that he would not arouse great hostility among the people, who might say, ¹⁸"It was because Simon² did not send him the money and the sons, that Jonathan¹ perished." ¹⁹So he sent the sons and the hundred talents, but Trypho^a broke his word and did not release Jonathan.

20 After this Trypho came to invade the country and destroy it, and he circled around by the way to Adora. But Simon and his army kept marching along opposite him to every place he went. ²¹Now the men in the citadel kept sending envoys to Trypho urging him to come to them by way of the wilderness and to send them food. ²²So Trypho got all his cavalry ready to go, but that night a very heavy snow fell, and he did not go because of the snow. He marched off and went into the land of Gilead. ²³When he approached Baskama, he killed Jonathan, and he was buried there. ²⁴Then Trypho turned and went back to his own land.

Jonathan's Tomb

25 Simon sent and took the bones of his brother Jonathan, and buried him in Modein, the city of his ancestors. ²⁶All Israel bewailed him with great lamentation, and mourned for him many days. ²⁷And Simon built a monument over the tomb of his father and his brothers; he made it high so that it might be seen, with polished stone at the front and back. ²⁸He also erected seven pyramids, opposite one another, for his father and mother and four brothers. ²⁹For the pyramids^b he devised an elaborate setting, erecting about them great columns, and on the columns he put suits of armor for a permanent memorial, and beside the suits of armor he carved ships, so that they could be seen by all who sail the sea. ³⁰This is the tomb that he built in Modein; it remains to this day.

Judea Gains Independence

31 Trypho dealt treacherously with the young King Antiochus; he killed him ³²and became king in his place, putting on the crown of Asia; and he brought great calamity on the land. ³³But Simon built up the strongholds of Judea and walled them all around, with high towers and great walls and gates and bolts, and he stored food in the strongholds. ³⁴Simon also chose emissaries and sent them to King Demetrius with a request to grant relief to the country, for all that Trypho did was to plunder. ³⁵King Demetrius sent him a favorable reply to this request, and wrote him a letter as follows, ³⁶"King Demetrius to Simon, the high priest and friend of kings, and to the elders and nation of the Jews, greetings. ³⁷We have received the gold crown and the palm branch that you^c sent, and we are ready to make a general peace with you and to write to our officials to grant you release from tribute. ³⁸All the grants that we have made to you remain valid, and let the strongholds that you have built be your possession. ³⁹We pardon any errors and offenses committed to this day, and cancel the crown tax that you owe; and whatever other tax has been collected in Jerusalem shall be collected no longer. ⁴⁰And if any of you are qualified to be enrolled in our bodyguard,^d let them be enrolled, and let there be peace between us."

41 In the one hundred seventieth year^e the yoke of the Gentiles was removed from Israel, ⁴²and the people began to write in their documents and contracts, "In the first year of Simon the great high priest and commander and leader of the Jews."

The Capture of Gazara by Simon

43 In those days Simon^a encamped against Gazara^f and surrounded it with troops. He made a siege engine, brought it up to the city, and battered and captured one tower. ⁴⁴The men in the siege engine leaped out into the city, and a great tumult arose in the city. ⁴⁵The men in the city, with their wives and children, went up on the wall with their clothes torn, and they cried out with a loud voice, asking Simon to make peace with them; ⁴⁶they said, "Do not treat us according to our wicked acts but according to your mercy." ⁴⁷So Simon

² Gk I ^a Gk he ^b Gk For these ^c The word you in verses 37–40 is plural ^d Or court ^e 142 B.C. ^f Cn: Gk Gaza

reached an agreement with them and stopped fighting against them. But he expelled them from the city and cleansed the houses in which the idols were located, and then entered it with hymns and praise.⁴⁸ He removed all uncleanness from it, and settled in it those who observed the law. He also strengthened its fortifications and built in it a house for himself.

Simon Regains the Citadel at Jerusalem

49 Those who were in the citadel at Jerusalem were prevented from going in and out to buy and sell in the country. So they were very hungry, and many of them perished from famine.⁵⁰ Then they cried to Simon to make peace with them, and he did so. But he expelled them from there and cleansed the citadel from its pollutions.⁵¹ On the twenty-third day of the second month, in the one hundred seventy-first year,⁹ the Jews¹⁰ entered it with praise and palm branches, and with harps and cymbals and stringed instruments, and with hymns and songs, because a great enemy had been crushed and removed from Israel.⁵² Simon¹ decreed that every year they should celebrate this day with rejoicing. He strengthened the fortifications of the temple hill alongside the citadel, and he and his men lived there.⁵³ Simon saw that his son John had reached manhood, and so he made him commander of all the forces; and he lived at Gazara.

Capture of Demetrius

14 In the one hundred seventy-second year¹ King Demetrius assembled his forces and marched into Media to obtain help, so that he could make war against Trypho.² When King Arsaces of Persia and Media heard that Demetrius had invaded his territory, he sent one of his generals to take him alive.³ The general¹ went and defeated the army of Demetrius, and seized him and took him to Arsaces, who put him under guard.

Eulogy of Simon

⁴ The land^k had rest all the days of Simon.

He sought the good of his nation;
his rule was pleasing to them,

as was the honor shown him, all his days.

⁵ To crown all his honors he took Joppa for a harbor,

and opened a way to the isles of the sea.

⁶ He extended the borders of his nation, and gained full control of the country.

⁷ He gathered a host of captives; he ruled over Gazara and Beth-zur and the citadel,

and he removed its uncleanness from it; and there was none to oppose him.

⁸ They tilled their land in peace; the ground gave its increase, and the trees of the plains their fruit.

⁹ Old men sat in the streets; they all talked together of good things, and the youths put on splendid military attire.

¹⁰ He supplied the towns with food, and furnished them with the means of defense, until his renown spread to the ends of the earth.

¹¹ He established peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy.

¹² All the people sat under their own vines and fig trees, and there was none to make them afraid.

¹³ No one was left in the land to fight them, and the kings were crushed in those days.

¹⁴ He gave help to all the humble among his people; he sought out the law, and did away with all the renegades and outlaws.

¹⁵ He made the sanctuary glorious, and added to the vessels of the sanctuary.

Diplomacy with Rome and Sparta

16 It was heard in Rome, and as far away as Sparta, that Jonathan had died, and they were deeply grieved.¹⁷ When they heard that his brother Simon had become high priest in his stead, and that he was ruling over the country and the towns in it,¹⁸ they wrote to him on bronze tablets to renew with him the friendship and alliance that they had established with his brothers Judas and Jonathan.¹⁹ And these were read before the assembly in Jerusalem.

⁹ 141 B.C. ¹⁰ Gk they ¹¹ Gk He ¹² 140 B.C. ^k Other ancient authorities add of Judah

20 This is a copy of the letter that the Spartans sent:

"The rulers and the city of the Spartans to the high priest Simon and to the elders and the priests and the rest of the Jewish people, our brothers, greetings. ²¹The envoys who were sent to our people have told us about your glory and honor, and we rejoiced at their coming. ²²We have recorded what they said in our public decrees, as follows, 'Numenius son of Antiochus and Antipater son of Jason, envoys of the Jews, have come to us to renew their friendship with us. ²³It has pleased our people to receive these men with honor and to put a copy of their words in the public archives, so that the people of the Spartans may have a record of them. And they have sent a copy of this to the high priest Simon.' "

24 After this Simon sent Numenius to Rome with a large gold shield weighing one thousand minas, to confirm the alliance with the Romans.¹

Official Honors for Simon

25 When the people heard these things they said, "How shall we thank Simon and his sons? ²⁶For he and his brothers and the house of his father have stood firm; they have fought and repulsed Israel's enemies and established its freedom." ²⁷So they made a record on bronze tablets and put it on pillars on Mount Zion.

This is a copy of what they wrote: "On the eighteenth day of Elul, in the one hundred seventy-second year,^m which is the third year of the great high priest Simon, ²⁸in Asaramel," in the great assembly of the priests and the people and the rulers of the nation and the elders of the country, the following was proclaimed to us:

29 "Since wars often occurred in the country, Simon son of Mattathias, a priest of the sons^o of Joarib, and his brothers, exposed themselves to danger and resisted the enemies of their nation, in order that their sanctuary and the law might be preserved; and they brought great glory to their nation. ³⁰Jonathan rallied the^p nation, became their high priest, and was gathered to his people. ³¹When their enemies decided to invade their country and lay hands on their sanctuary, ³²then Simon rose up and

fought for his nation. He spent great sums of his own money; he armed the soldiers of his nation and paid them wages. ³³He fortified the towns of Judea, and Beth-zur on the borders of Judea, where formerly the arms of the enemy had been stored, and he placed there a garrison of Jews. ³⁴He also fortified Joppa, which is by the sea, and Gazara, which is on the borders of Azotus, where the enemy formerly lived. He settled Jews there, and provided in those towns¹ whatever was necessary for their restoration.

35 "The people saw Simon's faithfulness^q and the glory that he had resolved to win for his nation, and they made him their leader and high priest, because he had done all these things and because of the justice and loyalty that he had maintained toward his nation. He sought in every way to exalt his people. ³⁶In his days things prospered in his hands, so that the Gentiles were put out of the^r country, as were also those in the city of David in Jerusalem, who had built themselves a citadel from which they used to sally forth and defile the environs of the sanctuary, doing great damage to its purity. ³⁷He settled Jews in it and fortified it for the safety of the country and of the city, and built the walls of Jerusalem higher.

38 "In view of these things King Demetrius confirmed him in the high priesthood, ³⁹made him one of his Friends, and paid him high honors. ⁴⁰For he had heard that the Jews were addressed by the Romans as friends and allies and brothers, and that the Romans^r had received the envoys of Simon with honor.

41 "The Jews and their priests have resolved that Simon should be their leader and high priest forever, until a trustworthy prophet should arise, ⁴²and that he should be governor over them and that he should take charge of the sanctuary and appoint officials over its tasks and over the country and the weapons and the strongholds, and that he should take charge of the sanctuary, ⁴³and that he should be obeyed by all, and that all contracts in the country should be written in his name, and that he should be clothed in purple and wear gold.

44 "None of the people or priests shall be permitted to nullify any of these decisions or to oppose what he says, or to convene an

¹ Gk them ^m 140 B.C. ⁿ This word resembles the Hebrew words for the court of the people of God or the prince of the people of God ^o Meaning of Gk uncertain ^p Gk their ^q Other ancient authorities read conduct ^r Gk they

assembly in the country without his permission, or to be clothed in purple or put on a gold buckle. ⁴³Whoever acts contrary to these decisions or rejects any of them shall be liable to punishment."

46 All the people agreed to grant Simon the right to act in accordance with these decisions. ⁴⁷So Simon accepted and agreed to be high priest, to be commander and ethnarch of the Jews and priests, and to be protector of them all. ⁴⁸And they gave orders to inscribe this decree on bronze tablets, to put them up in a conspicuous place in the precincts of the sanctuary, ⁴⁹and to deposit copies of them in the treasury, so that Simon and his sons might have them.

Letter of Antiochus VII

15 Antiochus, son of King Demetrius, sent a letter from the islands of the sea to Simon, the priest and ethnarch of the Jews, and to all the nation; ²its contents were as follows: "King Antiochus to Simon the high priest and ethnarch and to the nation of the Jews, greetings. ³Whereas certain scoundrels have gained control of the kingdom of our ancestors, and I intend to lay claim to the kingdom so that I may restore it as it formerly was, and have recruited a host of mercenary troops and have equipped warships, ⁴and intend to make a landing in the country so that I may proceed against those who have destroyed our country and those who have devastated many cities in my kingdom, ⁵now therefore I confirm to you all the tax remissions that the kings before me have granted you, and a release from all the other payments from which they have released you. ⁶I permit you to mint your own coinage as money for your country, ⁷and I grant freedom to Jerusalem and the sanctuary. All the weapons that you have prepared and the strongholds that you have built and now hold shall remain yours. ⁸Every debt you owe to the royal treasury and any such future debts shall be canceled for you from henceforth and for all time. ⁹When we gain control of our kingdom, we will bestow great honor on you and your nation and the temple, so that your glory will become manifest in all the earth."

10 In the one hundred seventy-fourth year¹ Antiochus set out and invaded the land of his ancestors. All the troops rallied

to him, so that there were only a few with Trypho. ¹¹Antiochus pursued him, and Trypho² came in his flight to Dor, which is by the sea; ¹²for he knew that troubles had converged on him, and his troops had deserted him. ¹³So Antiochus encamped against Dor, and with him were one hundred twenty thousand warriors and eight thousand cavalry. ¹⁴He surrounded the town, and the ships joined battle from the sea; he pressed the town hard from land and sea, and permitted no one to leave or enter it.

Rome Supports the Jews

15 Then Numenius and his companions arrived from Rome, with letters to the kings and countries, in which the following was written: ¹⁶"Lucius, consul of the Romans, to King Ptolemy, greetings. ¹⁷The envoys of the Jews have come to us as our friends and allies to renew our ancient friendship and alliance. They had been sent by the high priest Simon and by the Jewish people ¹⁸and have brought a gold shield weighing one thousand minas. ¹⁹We therefore have decided to write to the kings and countries that they should not seek their harm or make war against them and their cities and their country, or make alliance with those who war against them. ²⁰And it has seemed good to us to accept the shield from them. ²¹Therefore if any scoundrels have fled to you from their country, hand them over to the high priest Simon, so that he may punish them according to their law."

22 The consul³ wrote the same thing to King Demetrius and to Attalus and Ariarathes and Arsaces, ²³and to all the countries, and to Sampsames,⁴ and to the Spartans, and to Delos, and to Myndos, and to Sicyon, and to Caria, and to Samos, and to Pamphylia, and to Lycia, and to Halicarnassus, and to Rhodes, and to Phaselis, and to Cos, and to Side, and to Aradus and Gortyna and Cnidus and Cyprus and Cyrene. ²⁴They also sent a copy of these things to the high priest Simon.

Antiochus VII Threatens Simon

25 King Antiochus besieged Dor for the second time, continually throwing his forces against it and making engines of war; and he shut Trypho up and kept him from going out or in. ²⁶And Simon sent to Antiochus⁵

¹Or to preside over them all ²138 B.C. ³Gk he ⁴Gk He ⁵The name is uncertain ⁶Gk him

two thousand picked troops, to fight for him, and silver and gold and a large amount of military equipment. ²⁷But he refused to receive them, and broke all the agreements he formerly had made with Simon, and became estranged from him. ²⁸He sent to him Athenobius, one of his Friends, to confer with him, saying, "You hold control of Joppa and Gazara and the citadel in Jerusalem: they are cities of my kingdom. ²⁹You have devastated their territory, you have done great damage in the land, and you have taken possession of many places in my kingdom. ³⁰Now then, hand over the cities that you have seized and the tribute money of the places that you have conquered outside the borders of Judea; ³¹or else pay me five hundred talents of silver for the destruction that you have caused and five hundred talents more for the tribute money of the cities. Otherwise we will come and make war on you."

32 So Athenobius, the king's Friend, came to Jerusalem, and when he saw the splendor of Simon, and the sideboard with its gold and silver plate, and his great magnificence, he was amazed. When he reported to him the king's message, ³³Simon said to him in reply: "We have neither taken foreign land nor seized foreign property, but only the inheritance of our ancestors, which at one time had been unjustly taken by our enemies. ³⁴Now that we have the opportunity, we are firmly holding the inheritance of our ancestors. ³⁵As for Joppa and Gazara, which you demand, they were causing great damage among the people and to our land; for them we will give you one hundred talents."

Athenobius^a did not answer him a word, ³⁶but returned in wrath to the king and reported to him these words, and also the splendor of Simon and all that he had seen. And the king was very angry.

Victory over Cendebeus

37 Meanwhile Trypho embarked on a ship and escaped to Orthosia. ³⁸Then the king made Cendebeus commander-in-chief of the coastal country, and gave him troops of infantry and cavalry. ³⁹He commanded him to encamp against Judea, to build up Kedron and fortify its gates, and to make war on the people; but the king pursued Trypho. ⁴⁰So Cendebeus came to Jamnia

and began to provoke the people and invade Judea and take the people captive and kill them. ⁴¹He built up Kedron and stationed horsemen and troops there, so that they might go out and make raids along the highways of Judea, as the king had ordered him.

16 John went up from Gazara and reported to his father Simon what Cendebeus had done. ²And Simon called in his two eldest sons Judas and John, and said to them: "My brothers and I and my father's house have fought the wars of Israel from our youth until this day, and things have prospered in our hands so that we have delivered Israel many times. ³But now I have grown old, and you by Heaven's² mercy are mature in years. Take my place and my brother's, and go out and fight for our nation, and may the help that comes from Heaven be with you."

4 So John^a chose out of the country twenty thousand warriors and cavalry, and they marched against Cendebeus and camped for the night in Modein. ⁵Early in the morning they started out and marched into the plain, where a large force of infantry and cavalry was coming to meet them; and a stream lay between them. ⁶Then he and his army lined up against them. He saw that the soldiers were afraid to cross the stream, so he crossed over first; and when his troops saw him, they crossed over after him. ⁷Then he divided the army and placed the cavalry in the center of the infantry, for the cavalry of the enemy were very numerous. ⁸They sounded the trumpets, and Cendebeus and his army were put to flight; many of them fell wounded and the rest fled into the stronghold. ⁹At that time Judas the brother of John was wounded, but John pursued them until Cendebeus^b reached Kedron, which he had built. ¹⁰They also fled into the towers that were in the fields of Azotus, and John^b burned it with fire, and about two thousand of them fell. He then returned to Judea safely.

Murder of Simon and His Sons

11 Now Ptolemy son of Abubus had been appointed governor over the plain of Jericho; he had a large store of silver and gold, ¹²for he was son-in-law of the high priest. ¹³His heart was lifted up; he determined to get control of the country, and made treach-

^a Gk He ² Gk his ³ Other ancient authorities read he ^b Gk he

erous plans against Simon and his sons, to do away with them. ¹⁴Now Simon was visiting the towns of the country and attending to their needs, and he went down to Jericho with his sons Mattathias and Judas, in the one hundred seventy-seventh year,^c in the eleventh month, which is the month of Shebat. ¹⁵The son of Abubus received them treacherously in the little stronghold called Dok, which he had built; he gave them a great banquet, and hid men there. ¹⁶When Simon and his sons were drunk, Ptolemy and his men rose up, took their weapons, rushed in against Simon in the banquet hall and killed him and his two sons, as well as some of his servants. ¹⁷So he committed an act of great treachery and returned evil for good.

John Succeeds Simon

18 Then Ptolemy wrote a report about these things and sent it to the king, asking

him to send troops to aid him and to turn over to him the towns and the country. ¹⁹He sent other troops to Gazara to do away with John; he sent letters to the captains asking them to come to him so that he might give them silver and gold and gifts; ²⁰and he sent other troops to take possession of Jerusalem and the temple hill. ²¹But someone ran ahead and reported to John at Gazara that his father and brothers had perished, and that "he has sent men to kill you also." ²²When he heard this, he was greatly shocked; he seized the men who came to destroy him and killed them, for he had found out that they were seeking to destroy him.

23 The rest of the acts of John and his wars and the brave deeds that he did, and the building of the walls that he completed, and his achievements, ²⁴are written in the annals of his high priesthood, from the time that he became high priest after his father.

^c 134 B.C.

2 MACCABEES

A Letter to the Jews in Egypt

1 The Jews in Jerusalem and those in the land of Judea,
To their Jewish kindred in Egypt,
Greetings and true peace.

2 May God do good to you, and may he remember his covenant with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, his faithful servants. ³May he give you all a heart to worship him and to do his will with a strong heart and a willing spirit. ⁴May he open your heart to his law and his commandments, and may he bring peace. ⁵May he hear your prayers and be reconciled to you, and may he not forsake you in time of evil. ⁶We are now praying for you here.

7 In the reign of Demetrius, in the one hundred sixty-ninth year,^a we Jews wrote to you, in the critical distress that came upon us in those years after Jason and his company revolted from the holy land and the

kingdom ⁸and burned the gate and shed innocent blood. We prayed to the Lord and were heard, and we offered sacrifice and grain offering, and we lit the lamps and set out the loaves. ⁹And now see that you keep the festival of booths in the month of Chislew, in the one hundred eighty-eighth year.^b

A Letter to Aristobulus

10 The people of Jerusalem and of Judea and the senate and Judas,

To Aristobulus, who is of the family of the anointed priests, teacher of King Ptolemy, and to the Jews in Egypt,

Greetings and good health.

11 Having been saved by God out of grave dangers we thank him greatly for taking our side against the king.^c ¹²For he drove out those who fought against the holy city. ¹³When the leader reached Persia

^a 143 B.C. ^b 124 B.C. ^c Cn: Gk as those who array themselves against a king

with a force that seemed irresistible, they were cut to pieces in the temple of Nanea by a deception employed by the priests of the goddess^d Nanea.¹⁴ On the pretext of intending to marry her, Antiochus came to the place together with his Friends, to secure most of its treasures as a dowry.¹⁵ When the priests of the temple of Nanea had set out the treasures and Antiochus had come with a few men inside the wall of the sacred precinct, they closed the temple as soon as he entered it.¹⁶ Opening a secret door in the ceiling, they threw stones and struck down the leader and his men; they dismembered them and cut off their heads and threw them to the people outside.¹⁷ Blessed in every way be our God, who has brought judgment on those who have behaved impiously.

Fire Consumes Nehemiah's Sacrifice

18 Since on the twenty-fifth day of Chislew we shall celebrate the purification of the temple, we thought it necessary to notify you, in order that you also may celebrate the festival of booths and the festival of the fire given when Nehemiah, who built the temple and the altar, offered sacrifices.

19 For when our ancestors were being led captive to Persia, the pious priests of that time took some of the fire of the altar and secretly hid it in the hollow of a dry cistern, where they took such precautions that the place was unknown to anyone.²⁰ But after many years had passed, when it pleased God, Nehemiah, having been commissioned by the king of Persia, sent the descendants of the priests who had hidden the fire to get it. And when they reported to us that they had not found fire but only a thick liquid, he ordered them to dip it out and bring it.²¹ When the materials for the sacrifices were presented, Nehemiah ordered the priests to sprinkle the liquid on the wood and on the things laid upon it.²² When this had been done and some time had passed, and when the sun, which had been clouded over, shone out, a great fire blazed up, so that all marveled.²³ And while the sacrifice was being consumed, the priests offered prayer—the priests and everyone. Jonathan led, and the rest responded, as did Nehemiah.²⁴ The prayer was to this effect:

“O Lord, Lord God, Creator of all things, you are awe-inspiring and strong and just

and merciful, you alone are king and are kind,²⁵ you alone are bountiful, you alone are just and almighty and eternal. You rescue Israel from every evil; you chose the ancestors and consecrated them.²⁶ Accept this sacrifice on behalf of all your people Israel and preserve your portion and make it holy.²⁷ Gather together our scattered people, set free those who are slaves among the Gentiles, look on those who are rejected and despised, and let the Gentiles know that you are our God.²⁸ Punish those who oppress and are insolent with pride.²⁹ Plant your people in your holy place, as Moses promised.”

30 Then the priests sang the hymns.³¹ After the materials of the sacrifice had been consumed, Nehemiah ordered that the liquid that was left should be poured on large stones.³² When this was done, a flame blazed up; but when the light from the altar shone back, it went out.³³ When this matter became known, and it was reported to the king of the Persians that, in the place where the exiled priests had hidden the fire, the liquid had appeared with which Nehemiah and his associates had burned the materials of the sacrifice,³⁴ the king investigated the matter, and enclosed the place and made it sacred.³⁵ And with those persons whom the king favored he exchanged many excellent gifts.³⁶ Nehemiah and his associates called this “nephthar,” which means purification, but by most people it is called naphtha.^e

Jeremiah Hides the Tent, Ark, and Altar

2 One finds in the records that the prophet Jeremiah ordered those who were being deported to take some of the fire, as has been mentioned,² and that the prophet, after giving them the law, instructed those who were being deported not to forget the commandments of the Lord, or to be led astray in their thoughts on seeing the gold and silver statues and their adornment.³ And with other similar words he exhorted them that the law should not depart from their hearts.

4 It was also in the same document that the prophet, having received an oracle, ordered that the tent and the ark should follow with him, and that he went out to the mountain where Moses had gone up and had seen the inheritance of God.⁵ Jeremiah came and found a cave-dwelling,

^d Gk lacks the goddess ^e Gk nephthai

and he brought there the tent and the ark and the altar of incense; then he sealed up the entrance. "Some of those who followed him came up intending to mark the way, but could not find it. ⁷When Jeremiah learned of it, he rebuked them and declared: "The place shall remain unknown until God gathers his people together again and shows his mercy. ⁸Then the Lord will disclose these things, and the glory of the Lord and the cloud will appear, as they were shown in the case of Moses, and as Solomon asked that the place should be specially consecrated."

⁹ It was also made clear that being possessed of wisdom Solomon^f offered sacrifice for the dedication and completion of the temple. ¹⁰Just as Moses prayed to the Lord, and fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifices, so also Solomon prayed, and the fire came down and consumed the whole burnt offerings. ¹¹And Moses said, "They were consumed because the sin offering had not been eaten." ¹²Likewise Solomon also kept the eight days.

¹³ The same things are reported in the records and in the memoirs of Nehemiah, and also that he founded a library and collected the books about the kings and prophets, and the writings of David, and letters of kings about votive offerings. ¹⁴In the same way Judas also collected all the books that had been lost on account of the war that had come upon us, and they are in our possession. ¹⁵So if you have need of them, send people to get them for you.

¹⁶ Since, therefore, we are about to celebrate the purification, we write to you. Will you therefore please keep the days? ¹⁷It is God who has saved all his people, and has returned the inheritance to all, and the kingship and the priesthood and the consecration, ¹⁸as he promised through the law. We have hope in God that he will soon have mercy on us and will gather us from everywhere under heaven into his holy place, for he has rescued us from great evils and has purified the place.

The Compiler's Preface

¹⁹ The story of Judas Maccabeus and his brothers, and the purification of the great temple, and the dedication of the altar, ²⁰and further the wars against Antiochus Epiphanes and his son Eupator, ²¹and the

appearances that came from heaven to those who fought bravely for Judaism, so that though few in number they seized the whole land and pursued the barbarian hordes, ²²and regained possession of the temple famous throughout the world, and liberated the city, and re-established the laws that were about to be abolished, while the Lord with great kindness became gracious to them— ²³all this, which has been set forth by Jason of Cyrene in five volumes, we shall attempt to condense into a single book. ²⁴For considering the flood of statistics involved and the difficulty there is for those who wish to enter upon the narratives of history because of the mass of material, ²⁵we have aimed to please those who wish to read, to make it easy for those who are inclined to memorize, and to profit all readers. ²⁶For us who have undertaken the toil of abbreviating, it is no light matter but calls for sweat and loss of sleep, ²⁷just as it is not easy for one who prepares a banquet and seeks the benefit of others. Nevertheless, to secure the gratitude of many we will gladly endure the uncomfortable toil, ²⁸leaving the responsibility for exact details to the compiler, while devoting our effort to arriving at the outlines of the condensation. ²⁹For as the master builder of a new house must be concerned with the whole construction, while the one who undertakes its painting and decoration has to consider only what is suitable for its adornment, such in my judgment is the case with us. ³⁰It is the duty of the original historian to occupy the ground, to discuss matters from every side, and to take trouble with details, ³¹but the one who recasts the narrative should be allowed to strive for brevity of expression and to forego exhaustive treatment. ³²At this point therefore let us begin our narrative, without adding any more to what has already been said; for it would be foolish to lengthen the preface while cutting short the history itself.

Arrival of Heliodorus in Jerusalem

3 While the holy city was inhabited in unbroken peace and the laws were strictly observed because of the piety of the high priest Onias and his hatred of wickedness, ²it came about that the kings themselves honored the place and glorified the temple with the finest presents, ³even to the

^fGk he

extent that King Seleucus of Asia defrayed from his own revenues all the expenses connected with the service of the sacrifices.

4 But a man named Simon, of the tribe of Benjamin, who had been made captain of the temple, had a disagreement with the high priest about the administration of the city market. ⁵Since he could not prevail over Onias, he went to Apollonius of Tarsus,^g who at that time was governor of Coelesyria and Phoenicia, ⁶and reported to him that the treasury in Jerusalem was full of untold sums of money, so that the amount of the funds could not be reckoned, and that they did not belong to the account of the sacrifices, but that it was possible for them to fall under the control of the king. ⁷When Apollonius met the king, he told him of the money about which he had been informed. The king^h chose Heliodorus, who was in charge of his affairs, and sent him with commands to effect the removal of the reported wealth. ⁸Heliodorus at once set out on his journey, ostensibly to make a tour of inspection of the cities of Coelesyria and Phoenicia, but in fact to carry out the king's purpose.

9 When he had arrived at Jerusalem and had been kindly welcomed by the high priest ofⁱ the city, he told about the disclosure that had been made and stated why he had come, and he inquired whether this really was the situation. ¹⁰The high priest explained that there were some deposits belonging to widows and orphans, ¹¹and also some money of Hyrcanus son of Tobias, a man of very prominent position, and that it totaled in all four hundred talents of silver and two hundred of gold. To such an extent the impious Simon had misrepresented the facts. ¹²And he said that it was utterly impossible that wrong should be done to those people who had trusted in the holiness of the place and in the sanctity and inviolability of the temple that is honored throughout the whole world.

Heliodorus Plans to Rob the Temple

13 But Heliodorus, because of the orders he had from the king, said that this money must in any case be confiscated for the king's treasury. ¹⁴So he set a day and went in to direct the inspection of these funds.

There was no little distress throughout the whole city. ¹⁵The priests prostrated them-

selves before the altar in their priestly vestments and called toward heaven upon him who had given the law about deposits, that he should keep them safe for those who had deposited them. ¹⁶To see the appearance of the high priest was to be wounded at heart, for his face and the change in his color disclosed the anguish of his soul. ¹⁷For terror and bodily trembling had come over the man, which plainly showed to those who looked at him the pain lodged in his heart. ¹⁸People also hurried out of their houses in crowds to make a general supplication because the holy place was about to be brought into dishonor. ¹⁹Women, girded with sackcloth under their breasts, thronged the streets. Some of the young women who were kept indoors ran together to the gates, and some to the walls, while others peered out of the windows. ²⁰And holding up their hands to heaven, they all made supplication. ²¹There was something pitiable in the prostration of the whole populace and the anxiety of the high priest in his great anguish.

The Lord Protects His Temple

22 While they were calling upon the Almighty Lord that he would keep what had been entrusted safe and secure for those who had entrusted it, ²³Heliodorus went on with what had been decided. ²⁴But when he arrived at the treasury with his bodyguard, then and there the Sovereign of spirits and of all authority caused so great a manifestation that all who had been so bold as to accompany him were astounded by the power of God, and became faint with terror. ²⁵For there appeared to them a magnificently caparisoned horse, with a rider of frightening mien; it rushed furiously at Heliodorus and struck at him with its front hoofs. Its rider was seen to have armor and weapons of gold. ²⁶Two young men also appeared to him, remarkably strong, gloriously beautiful and splendidly dressed, who stood on either side of him and flogged him continuously, inflicting many blows on him. ²⁷When he suddenly fell to the ground and deep darkness came over him, his men took him up, put him on a stretcher, ²⁸and carried him away—this man who had just entered the aforesaid treasury with a great retinue and all his bodyguard but was now unable to help himself. They recognized clearly the sovereign power of God.

^g Gk Apollonius son of Tharseas ^h Gk He ⁱ Other ancient authorities read and

Onias Prays for Heliodorus

29 While he lay prostrate, speechless because of the divine intervention and deprived of any hope of recovery,³⁰ they praised the Lord who had acted marvelously for his own place. And the temple, which a little while before was full of fear and disturbance, was filled with joy and gladness, now that the Almighty Lord had appeared.

31 Some of Heliodorus's friends quickly begged Onias to call upon the Most High to grant life to one who was lying quite at his last breath.³² So the high priest, fearing that the king might get the notion that some foul play had been perpetrated by the Jews with regard to Heliodorus, offered sacrifice for the man's recovery.³³ While the high priest was making an atonement, the same young men appeared again to Heliodorus dressed in the same clothing, and they stood and said, "Be very grateful to the high priest Onias, since for his sake the Lord has granted you your life."³⁴ And see that you, who have been flogged by heaven, report to all people the majestic power of God." Having said this they vanished.

The Conversion of Heliodorus

35 Then Heliodorus offered sacrifice to the Lord and made very great vows to the Savior of his life, and having bidden Onias farewell, he marched off with his forces to the king.³⁶ He bore testimony to all concerning the deeds of the supreme God, which he had seen with his own eyes.³⁷ When the king asked Heliodorus what sort of person would be suitable to send on another mission to Jerusalem, he replied,³⁸ "If you have any enemy or plotter against your government, send him there, for you will get him back thoroughly flogged, if he survives at all; for there is certainly some power of God about the place."³⁹ For he who has his dwelling in heaven watches over that place himself and brings it aid, and he strikes and destroys those who come to do it injury."⁴⁰ This was the outcome of the episode of Heliodorus and the protection of the treasury.

Simon Accuses Onias

4 The previously mentioned Simon, who had informed about the money against¹ his own country, slandered Onias, saying that it was he who had incited Heliodorus

and had been the real cause of the misfortune.² He dared to designate as a plotter against the government the man who was the benefactor of the city, the protector of his compatriots, and a zealot for the laws.³ When his hatred progressed to such a degree that even murders were committed by one of Simon's approved agents,⁴ Onias recognized that the rivalry was serious and that Apollonius son of Menestheus,⁵ and governor of Coelesyria and Phoenicia, was intensifying the malice of Simon.⁶ So he appealed to the king, not accusing his compatriots but having in view the welfare, both public and private, of all the people.⁷ For he saw that without the king's attention public affairs could not again reach a peaceful settlement, and that Simon would not stop his folly.

Jason's Reforms

7 When Seleucus died and Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes, succeeded to the kingdom, Jason the brother of Onias obtained the high priesthood by corruption,⁸ promising the king at an interview¹ three hundred sixty talents of silver, and from another source of revenue eighty talents.⁹ In addition to this he promised to pay one hundred fifty more if permission were given to establish by his authority a gymnasium and a body of youth for it, and to enroll the people of Jerusalem as citizens of Antioch.¹⁰ When the king assented and Jason^m came to office, he at once shifted his compatriots over to the Greek way of life.

11 He set aside the existing royal concessions to the Jews, secured through John the father of Eupolemus, who went on the mission to establish friendship and alliance with the Romans; and he destroyed the lawful ways of living and introduced new customs contrary to the law.¹² He took delight in establishing a gymnasium right under the citadel, and he induced the noblest of the young men to wear the Greek hat.¹³ There was such an extreme of Hellenization and increase in the adoption of foreign ways because of the surpassing wickedness of Jason, who was ungodly and no trueⁿ high priest,¹⁴ that the priests were no longer intent upon their service at the altar. Despising the sanctuary and neglecting the sacrifices, they hurried to take part in the unlawful proceedings in the wrestling

¹ Gk and ² Vg Compare verse 21: Meaning of Gk uncertain ³ Or by a petition ^m Gk he ⁿ Gk lacks true

arena after the signal for the discus-throwing, ¹⁵disdaining the honors prized by their ancestors and putting the highest value upon Greek forms of prestige. ¹⁶For this reason heavy disaster overtook them, and those whose ways of living they admired and wished to imitate completely became their enemies and punished them. ¹⁷It is no light thing to show irreverence to the divine laws—a fact that later events will make clear.

Jason Introduces Greek Customs

18 When the quadrennial games were being held at Tyre and the king was present, ¹⁹the vile Jason sent envoys, chosen as being Antiochian citizens from Jerusalem, to carry three hundred silver drachmas for the sacrifice to Hercules. Those who carried the money, however, thought best not to use it for sacrifice, because that was inappropriate, but to expend it for another purpose. ²⁰So this money was intended by the sender for the sacrifice to Hercules, but by the decision of its carriers it was applied to the construction of triremes.

21 When Apollonius son of Menestheus was sent to Egypt for the coronation^o of Philometor as king, Antiochus learned that Philometor^r had become hostile to his government, and he took measures for his own security. Therefore upon arriving at Joppa he proceeded to Jerusalem. ²²He was welcomed magnificently by Jason and the city, and ushered in with a blaze of torches and with shouts. Then he marched his army into Phoenicia.

Menelaus Becomes High Priest

23 After a period of three years Jason sent Menelaus, the brother of the previously mentioned Simon, to carry the money to the king and to complete the records of essential business. ²⁴But he, when presented to the king, extolled him with an air of authority, and secured the high priesthood for himself, outbidding Jason by three hundred talents of silver. ²⁵After receiving the king's orders he returned, possessing no qualification for the high priesthood, but having the hot temper of a cruel tyrant and the rage of a savage wild beast. ²⁶So Jason, who after supplanting his own brother was supplanted by another man, was driven as

a fugitive into the land of Ammon. ²⁷Although Menelaus continued to hold the office, he did not pay regularly any of the money promised to the king. ²⁸When Sostratus the captain of the citadel kept requesting payment—for the collection of the revenue was his responsibility—the two of them were summoned by the king on account of this issue. ²⁹Menelaus left his own brother Lysimachus as deputy in the high priesthood, while Sostratus left Crates, the commander of the Cyprian troops.

The Murder of Onias

30 While such was the state of affairs, it happened that the people of Tarsus and of Mallus revolted because their cities had been given as a present to Antiochis, the king's concubine. ³¹So the king went hurriedly to settle the trouble, leaving Andronicus, a man of high rank, to act as his deputy. ³²But Menelaus, thinking he had obtained a suitable opportunity, stole some of the gold vessels of the temple and gave them to Andronicus; other vessels, as it happened, he had sold to Tyre and the neighboring cities. ³³When Onias became fully aware of these acts, he publicly exposed them, having first withdrawn to a place of sanctuary at Daphne near Antioch. ³⁴Therefore Menelaus, taking Andronicus aside, urged him to kill Onias. Andronicus^q came to Onias, and resorting to treachery, offered him sworn pledges and gave him his right hand; he persuaded him, though still suspicious, to come out from the place of sanctuary; then, with no regard for justice, he immediately put him out of the way.

Andronicus Is Punished

35 For this reason not only Jews, but many also of other nations, were grieved and displeased at the unjust murder of the man. ³⁶When the king returned from the region of Cilicia, the Jews in the city^r appealed to him with regard to the unreasonable murder of Onias, and the Greeks shared their hatred of the crime. ³⁷Therefore Antiochus was grieved at heart and filled with pity, and wept because of the moderation and good conduct of the deceased. ³⁸Inflamed with anger, he immediately stripped off the purple robe from Andronicus, tore off his clothes, and led him around the whole

^o Meaning of Gk uncertain ^r Gk he ^q Gk He ^r Or in each city

city to that very place where he had committed the outrage against Onias, and there he dispatched the bloodthirsty fellow. The Lord thus repaid him with the punishment he deserved.

Unpopularity of Lysimachus and Menelaus

39 When many acts of sacrilege had been committed in the city by Lysimachus with the connivance of Menelaus, and when report of them had spread abroad, the populace gathered against Lysimachus, because many of the gold vessels had already been stolen. ⁴⁰Since the crowds were becoming aroused and filled with anger, Lysimachus armed about three thousand men and launched an unjust attack, under the leadership of a certain Auranus, a man advanced in years and no less advanced in folly. ⁴¹But when the Jews³ became aware that Lysimachus was attacking them, some picked up stones, some blocks of wood, and others took handfuls of the ashes that were lying around, and threw them in wild confusion at Lysimachus and his men. ⁴²As a result, they wounded many of them, and killed some, and put all the rest to flight; the temple robber himself they killed close by the treasury.

43 Charges were brought against Menelaus about this incident. ⁴⁴When the king came to Tyre, three men sent by the senate presented the case before him. ⁴⁵But Menelaus, already as good as beaten, promised a substantial bribe to Ptolemy son of Dorymenes to win over the king. ⁴⁶Therefore Ptolemy, taking the king aside into a colonnade as if for refreshment, induced the king to change his mind. ⁴⁷Menelaus, the cause of all the trouble, he acquitted of the charges against him, while he sentenced to death those unfortunate men, who would have been freed uncondemned if they had pleaded even before Scythians. ⁴⁸And so those who had spoken for the city and the villages⁴ and the holy vessels quickly suffered the unjust penalty. ⁴⁹Therefore even the Tyrians, showing their hatred of the crime, provided magnificently for their funeral. ⁵⁰But Menelaus, because of the greed of those in power, remained in office, growing in wickedness, having become the chief plotter against his compatriots.

Jason Tries to Regain Control

5 About this time Antiochus made his second invasion of Egypt. ²And it happened that, for almost forty days, there appeared over all the city golden-clad cavalry charging through the air, in companies fully armed with lances and drawn swords—³troops of cavalry drawn up, attacks and counterattacks made on this side and on that, brandishing of shields, massing of spears, hurling of missiles, the flash of golden trappings, and armor of all kinds. ⁴Therefore everyone prayed that the apparition might prove to have been a good omen.

5 When a false rumor arose that Antiochus was dead, Jason took no fewer than a thousand men and suddenly made an assault on the city. When the troops on the wall had been forced back and at last the city was being taken, Menelaus took refuge in the citadel. ⁶But Jason kept relentlessly slaughtering his compatriots, not realizing that success at the cost of one's kindred is the greatest misfortune, but imagining that he was setting up trophies of victory over enemies and not over compatriots. ⁷He did not, however, gain control of the government; in the end he got only disgrace from his conspiracy, and fled again into the country of the Ammonites. ⁸Finally he met a miserable end. Accused⁵ before Aretas the ruler of the Arabs, fleeing from city to city, pursued by everyone, hated as a rebel against the laws, and abhorred as the executioner of his country and his compatriots, he was cast ashore in Egypt. ⁹There he who had driven many from their own country into exile died in exile, having embarked to go to the Lacedaemonians in hope of finding protection because of their kinship. ¹⁰He who had cast out many to lie unburied had no one to mourn for him; he had no funeral of any sort and no place in the tomb of his ancestors.

11 When news of what had happened reached the king, he took it to mean that Judea was in revolt. So, raging inwardly, he left Egypt and took the city by storm. ¹²He commanded his soldiers to cut down relentlessly everyone they met and to kill those who went into their houses. ¹³Then there was massacre of young and old, destruction of boys, women, and children, and slaughter of young girls and infants. ¹⁴Within the

³Gk they ⁴Other ancient authorities read the people ⁵Cn: Gk Imprisoned

total of three days eighty thousand were destroyed, forty thousand in hand-to-hand fighting, and as many were sold into slavery as were killed.

Pillage of the Temple

15 Not content with this, Antiochus^v dared to enter the most holy temple in all the world, guided by Menelaus, who had become a traitor both to the laws and to his country. ¹⁶He took the holy vessels with his polluted hands, and swept away with profane hands the votive offerings that other kings had made to enhance the glory and honor of the place. ¹⁷Antiochus was elated in spirit, and did not perceive that the Lord was angered for a little while because of the sins of those who lived in the city, and that this was the reason he was disregarding the holy place. ¹⁸But if it had not happened that they were involved in many sins, this man would have been flogged and turned back from his rash act as soon as he came forward, just as Heliodorus had been, whom King Seleucus sent to inspect the treasury. ¹⁹But the Lord did not choose the nation for the sake of the holy place, but the place for the sake of the nation. ²⁰Therefore the place itself shared in the misfortunes that befell the nation and afterward participated in its benefits; and what was forsaken in the wrath of the Almighty was restored again in all its glory when the great Lord became reconciled.

21 So Antiochus carried off eighteen hundred talents from the temple, and hurried away to Antioch, thinking in his arrogance that he could sail on the land and walk on the sea, because his mind was elated. ²²He left governors to oppress the people: at Jerusalem, Philip, by birth a Phrygian and in character more barbarous than the man who appointed him; ²³and at Gerizim, Andronicus; and besides these Menelaus, who lorded it over his compatriots worse than the others did. In his malice toward the Jewish citizens,^w ²⁴Antiochus^v sent Apollonius, the captain of the Mysians, with an army of twenty-two thousand, and commanded him to kill all the grown men and to sell the women and boys as slaves. ²⁵When this man arrived in Jerusalem, he pretended to be peaceably disposed and waited until the holy sabbath day; then,

finding the Jews not at work, he ordered his troops to parade under arms. ²⁶He put to the sword all those who came out to see them, then rushed into the city with his armed warriors and killed great numbers of people.

27 But Judas Maccabeus, with about nine others, got away to the wilderness, and kept himself and his companions alive in the mountains as wild animals do; they continued to live on what grew wild, so that they might not share in the defilement.

The Suppression of Judaism

6 Not long after this, the king sent an Athenian^x senator^y to compel the Jews to forsake the laws of their ancestors and no longer to live by the laws of God; ²also to pollute the temple in Jerusalem and to call it the temple of Olympian Zeus, and to call the one in Gerizim the temple of Zeus-the-Friend-of-Strangers, as did the people who lived in that place.

3 Harsh and utterly grievous was the onslaught of evil. ⁴For the temple was filled with debauchery and reveling by the Gentiles, who dallied with prostitutes and had intercourse with women within the sacred precincts, and besides brought in things for sacrifice that were unfit. ⁵The altar was covered with abominable offerings that were forbidden by the laws. ⁶People could neither keep the sabbath, nor observe the festivals of their ancestors, nor so much as confess themselves to be Jews.

7 On the monthly celebration of the king's birthday, the Jews^z were taken, under bitter constraint, to partake of the sacrifices; and when a festival of Dionysus was celebrated, they were compelled to wear wreaths of ivy and to walk in the procession in honor of Dionysus. ⁸At the suggestion of the people of Ptolemais^a a decree was issued to the neighboring Greek cities that they should adopt the same policy toward the Jews and make them partake of the sacrifices, ⁹and should kill those who did not choose to change over to Greek customs. One could see, therefore, the misery that had come upon them. ¹⁰For example, two women were brought in for having circumcised their children. They publicly paraded them around the city, with their babies hanging at their breasts, and then hurled them down head-

^v Gk he ^w Or worse than the others did in his malice toward the Jewish citizens ^x Other ancient authorities read Antiochian ^y Or Geron an Athenian ^z Gk they ^a Cn: Gk suggestion of the Ptolemies (or of Ptolemy)

long from the wall. ¹¹Others who had assembled in the caves nearby, in order to observe the seventh day secretly, were betrayed to Philip and were all burned together, because their piety kept them from defending themselves, in view of their regard for that most holy day.

Providential Significance of the Persecution

12 Now I urge those who read this book not to be depressed by such calamities, but to recognize that these punishments were designed not to destroy but to discipline our people. ¹³In fact, it is a sign of great kindness not to let the impious alone for long, but to punish them immediately. ¹⁴For in the case of the other nations the Lord waits patiently to punish them until they have reached the full measure of their sins; but he does not deal in this way with us, ¹⁵in order that he may not take vengeance on us afterward when our sins have reached their height. ¹⁶Therefore he never withdraws his mercy from us. Although he disciplines us with calamities, he does not forsake his own people. ¹⁷Let what we have said serve as a reminder; we must go on briefly with the story.

The Martyrdom of Eleazar

18 Eleazar, one of the scribes in high position, a man now advanced in age and of noble presence, was being forced to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh. ¹⁹But he, welcoming death with honor rather than life with pollution, went up to the rack of his own accord, spitting out the flesh, ²⁰as all ought to go who have the courage to refuse things that it is not right to taste, even for the natural love of life.

21 Those who were in charge of that unlawful sacrifice took the man aside because of their long acquaintance with him, and privately urged him to bring meat of his own providing, proper for him to use, and to pretend that he was eating the flesh of the sacrificial meal that had been commanded by the king, ²²so that by doing this he might be saved from death, and be treated kindly on account of his old friendship with them. ²³But making a high resolve, worthy of his years and the dignity of his old age and the gray hairs that he had reached with distinction and his excel-

lent life even from childhood, and moreover according to the holy God-given law, he declared himself quickly, telling them to send him to Hades.

24 "Such pretense is not worthy of our time of life," he said, "for many of the young might suppose that Eleazar in his ninetieth year had gone over to an alien religion. ²⁵and through my pretense, for the sake of living a brief moment longer, they would be led astray because of me, while I defile and disgrace my old age. ²⁶Even if for the present I would avoid the punishment of mortals, yet whether I live or die I shall not escape the hands of the Almighty. ²⁷Therefore, by bravely giving up my life now, I will show myself worthy of my old age ²⁸and leave to the young a noble example of how to die a good death willingly and nobly for the revered and holy laws."

When he had said this, he went ^b at once to the rack. ²⁹Those who a little before had acted toward him with goodwill now changed to ill will, because the words he had uttered were in their opinion sheer madness. ^c ³⁰When he was about to die under the blows, he groaned aloud and said: "It is clear to the Lord in his holy knowledge that, though I might have been saved from death, I am enduring terrible sufferings in my body under this beating, but in my soul I am glad to suffer these things because I fear him."

31 So in this way he died, leaving in his death an example of nobility and a memorial of courage, not only to the young but to the great body of his nation.

The Martyrdom of Seven Brothers

7 It happened also that seven brothers and their mother were arrested and were being compelled by the king, under torture with whips and thongs, to partake of unlawful swine's flesh. ²One of them, acting as their spokesman, said, "What do you intend to ask and learn from us? For we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our ancestors."

3 The king fell into a rage, and gave orders to have pans and caldrons heated. ⁴These were heated immediately, and he commanded that the tongue of their spokesman be cut out and that they scalp him and cut off his hands and feet, while the rest of the brothers and the mother looked on.

^b Other ancient authorities read *was dragged* ^c Meaning of Gk uncertain

⁵When he was utterly helpless, the king^d ordered them to take him to the fire, still breathing, and to fry him in a pan. The smoke from the pan spread widely, but the brothers^e and their mother encouraged one another to die nobly, saying, ⁶"The Lord God is watching over us and in truth has compassion on us, as Moses declared in his song that bore witness against the people to their faces, when he said, 'And he will have compassion on his servants.'"^f

7 After the first brother had died in this way, they brought forward the second for their sport. They tore off the skin of his head with the hair, and asked him, "Will you eat rather than have your body punished limb by limb?" ⁸He replied in the language of his ancestors and said to them, "No." Therefore he in turn underwent tortures as the first brother had done. ⁹And when he was at his last breath, he said, "You accursed wretch, you dismiss us from this present life, but the King of the universe will raise us up to an everlasting renewal of life, because we have died for his laws."

10 After him, the third was the victim of their sport. When it was demanded, he quickly put out his tongue and courageously stretched forth his hands, ¹¹and said nobly, "I got these from Heaven, and because of his laws I disdain them, and from him I hope to get them back again." ¹²As a result the king himself and those with him were astonished at the young man's spirit, for he regarded his sufferings as nothing.

13 After he too had died, they maltreated and tortured the fourth in the same way. ¹⁴When he was near death, he said, "One cannot but choose to die at the hands of mortals and to cherish the hope God gives of being raised again by him. But for you there will be no resurrection to life!"

15 Next they brought forward the fifth and maltreated him. ¹⁶But he looked at the king,^g and said, "Because you have authority among mortals, though you also are mortal, you do what you please. But do not think that God has forsaken our people. ¹⁷Keep on, and see how his mighty power will torture you and your descendants!"

18 After him they brought forward the sixth. And when he was about to die, he said, "Do not deceive yourself in vain. For we are suffering these things on our own

account, because of our sins against our own God. Therefore^h astounding things have happened. ¹⁹But do not think that you will go unpunished for having tried to fight against God!"

20 The mother was especially admirable and worthy of honorable memory. Although she saw her seven sons perish within a single day, she bore it with good courage because of her hope in the Lord. ²¹She encouraged each of them in the language of their ancestors. Filled with a noble spirit, she reinforced her woman's reasoning with a man's courage, and said to them, ²²"I do not know how you came into being in my womb. It was not I who gave you life and breath, nor I who set in order the elements within each of you. ²³Therefore the Creator of the world, who shaped the beginning of humankind and devised the origin of all things, will in his mercy give life and breath back to you again, since you now forget yourselves for the sake of his laws."

24 Antiochus felt that he was being treated with contempt, and he was suspicious of her reproachful tone. The youngest brother being still alive, Antiochusⁱ not only appealed to him in words, but promised with oaths that he would make him rich and enviable if he would turn from the ways of his ancestors, and that he would take him for his Friend and entrust him with public affairs. ²⁵Since the young man would not listen to him at all, the king called the mother to him and urged her to advise the youth to save himself. ²⁶After much urging on his part, she undertook to persuade her son. ²⁷But, leaning close to him, she spoke in their native language as follows, deriding the cruel tyrant: "My son, have pity on me. I carried you nine months in my womb, and nursed you for three years, and have reared you and brought you up to this point in your life, and have taken care of you.^j ²⁸I beg you, my child, to look at the heaven and the earth and see everything that is in them, and recognize that God did not make them out of things that existed.^k And in the same way the human race came into being. ²⁹Do not fear this butcher, but prove worthy of your brothers. Accept death, so that in God's mercy I may get you back again along with your brothers."

^a Gk he ^b Gk they ^c Gk slaves ^d Gk at him ^e Lat: Other ancient authorities lack Therefore ^f Or have borne the burden of your education ^g Or God made them out of things that did not exist

30 While she was still speaking, the young man said, "What are you^k waiting for? I will not obey the king's command, but I obey the command of the law that was given to our ancestors through Moses. ³¹But you,^l who have contrived all sorts of evil against the Hebrews, will certainly not escape the hands of God. ³²For we are suffering because of our own sins. ³³And if our living Lord is angry for a little while, to rebuke and discipline us, he will again be reconciled with his own servants."^m ³⁴But you, unholy wretch, you most defiled of all mortals, do not be elated in vain and puffed up by uncertain hopes, when you raise your hand against the children of heaven. ³⁵You have not yet escaped the judgment of the almighty, all-seeing God. ³⁶For our brothers after enduring a brief suffering have drunkⁿ of ever-flowing life, under God's covenant; but you, by the judgment of God, will receive just punishment for your arrogance. ³⁷I, like my brothers, give up body and life for the laws of our ancestors, appealing to God to show mercy soon to our nation and by trials and plagues to make you confess that he alone is God, ³⁸and through me and my brothers to bring to an end the wrath of the Almighty that has justly fallen on our whole nation."

39 The king fell into a rage, and handled him worse than the others, being exasperated at his scorn. ⁴⁰So he died in his integrity, putting his whole trust in the Lord.

41 Last of all, the mother died, after her sons.

42 Let this be enough, then, about the eating of sacrifices and the extreme tortures.

The Revolt of Judas Maccabeus

8 Meanwhile Judas, who was also called Maccabeus, and his companions secretly entered the villages and summoned their kindred and enlisted those who had continued in the Jewish faith, and so they gathered about six thousand. ²They implored the Lord to look upon the people who were oppressed by all; and to have pity on the temple that had been profaned by the godless; ³to have mercy on the city that was being destroyed and about to be leveled to the ground; to hearken to the blood that cried out to him; ⁴to remember also the lawless destruction of the innocent babies

and the blasphemies committed against his name; and to show his hatred of evil.

5 As soon as Maccabeus got his army organized, the Gentiles could not withstand him, for the wrath of the Lord had turned to mercy. ⁶Coming without warning, he would set fire to towns and villages. He captured strategic positions and put to flight not a few of the enemy. ⁷He found the nights most advantageous for such attacks. And talk of his valor spread everywhere.

8 When Philip saw that the man was gaining ground little by little, and that he was pushing ahead with more frequent successes, he wrote to Ptolemy, the governor of Colesyria and Phoenicia, to come to the aid of the king's government. ⁹Then Ptolemy^o promptly appointed Nicanor son of Patroclus, one of the king's chief^p Friends, and sent him, in command of no fewer than twenty thousand Gentiles of all nations, to wipe out the whole race of Judea. He associated with him Gorgias, a general and a man of experience in military service. ¹⁰Nicanor determined to make up for the king the tribute due to the Romans, two thousand talents, by selling the captured Jews into slavery. ¹¹So he immediately sent to the towns on the seacoast, inviting them to buy Jewish slaves and promising to hand over ninety slaves for a talent, not expecting the judgment from the Almighty that was about to overtake him.

Preparation for Battle

12 Word came to Judas concerning Nicanor's invasion; and when he told his companions of the arrival of the army, ¹³those who were cowardly and distrustful of God's justice ran off and got away. ¹⁴Others sold all their remaining property, and at the same time implored the Lord to rescue those who had been sold by the ungodly Nicanor before he ever met them, ¹⁵if not for their own sake, then for the sake of the covenants made with their ancestors, and because he had called them by his holy and glorious name. ¹⁶But Maccabeus gathered his forces together, to the number six thousand, and exhorted them not to be frightened by the enemy and not to fear the great multitude of Gentiles who were wickedly coming against them, but to fight nobly, ¹⁷keeping before their eyes the lawless out-

^k The Gk here for *you* is plural ^l The Gk here for *you* is singular ^m Gk *slaves* ⁿ Cn: Gk *fallen* ^o Gk *he* ^p Gk *one of the first*

rage that the Gentiles^a had committed against the holy place, and the torture of the derided city, and besides, the overthrow of their ancestral way of life. ¹⁸"For they trust to arms and acts of daring," he said, "but we trust in the Almighty God, who is able with a single nod to strike down those who are coming against us, and even, if necessary, the whole world."

¹⁹Moreover, he told them of the occasions when help came to their ancestors; how, in the time of Sennacherib, when one hundred eighty-five thousand perished, ²⁰and the time of the battle against the Galatians that took place in Babylonia, when eight thousand Jews^b fought along with four thousand Macedonians; yet when the Macedonians were hard pressed, the eight thousand, by the help that came to them from heaven, destroyed one hundred twenty thousand Galatians^c and took a great amount of booty.

Judas Defeats Nicanor

²¹With these words he filled them with courage and made them ready to die for their laws and their country; then he divided his army into four parts. ²²He appointed his brothers also, Simon and Joseph and Jonathan, each to command a division, putting fifteen hundred men under each. ²³Besides, he appointed Eleazar to read aloud^d from the holy book, and gave the watchword, "The help of God"; then, leading the first division himself, he joined battle with Nicanor.

²⁴With the Almighty as their ally, they killed more than nine thousand of the enemy, and wounded and disabled most of Nicanor's army, and forced them all to flee. ²⁵They captured the money of those who had come to buy them as slaves. After pursuing them for some distance, they were obliged to return because the hour was late. ²⁶It was the day before the sabbath, and for that reason they did not continue their pursuit. ²⁷When they had collected the arms of the enemy and stripped them of their spoils, they kept the sabbath, giving great praise and thanks to the Lord, who had preserved them for that day and allotted it to them as the beginning of mercy. ²⁸After the sabbath they gave some of the spoils to those who had been tortured and to the

widows and orphans, and distributed the rest among themselves and their children. ²⁹When they had done this, they made common supplication and implored the merciful Lord to be wholly reconciled with his servants."

Judas Defeats Timothy and Bacchides

³⁰In encounters with the forces of Timothy and Bacchides they killed more than twenty thousand of them and got possession of some exceedingly high strongholds, and they divided a very large amount of plunder, giving to those who had been tortured and to the orphans and widows, and also to the aged, shares equal to their own. ³¹They collected the arms of the enemy,^e and carefully stored all of them in strategic places; the rest of the spoils they carried to Jerusalem. ³²They killed the commander of Timothy's forces, a most wicked man, and one who had greatly troubled the Jews. ³³While they were celebrating the victory in the city of their ancestors, they burned those who had set fire to the sacred gates, Callisthenes and some others, who had fled into one little house; so these received the proper reward for their impiety.^f

³⁴The thrice-cursed Nicanor, who had brought the thousand merchants to buy the Jews,^g having been humbled with the help of the Lord by opponents whom he regarded as of the least account, took off his splendid uniform and made his way alone like a runaway slave across the country until he reached Antioch, having succeeded chiefly in the destruction of his own army! ³⁶So he who had undertaken to secure tribute for the Romans by the capture of the people of Jerusalem proclaimed that the Jews had a Defender, and that therefore the Jews were invulnerable, because they followed the laws ordained by him.

The Last Campaign of Antiochus Epiphanes

9 About that time, as it happened, Antiochus had retreated in disorder from the region of Persia. ²He had entered the city called Persepolis and attempted to rob the temples and control the city. Therefore the people rushed to the rescue with arms, and Antiochus and his army were defeated,^h with the result that Antiochus

^a Gk *they* ^b Gk lacks *Jews* ^c Gk lacks *Galatians* ^d Meaning of Gk uncertain ^e Gk *slaves* ^f Gk *their arms* ^g Gk *they were defeated*

was put to flight by the inhabitants and beat a shameful retreat. ³While he was in Ecbatana, news came to him of what had happened to Nicanor and the forces of Timothy. ⁴Transported with rage, he conceived the idea of turning upon the Jews the injury done by those who had put him to flight; so he ordered his charioteer to drive without stopping until he completed the journey. But the judgment of heaven rode with him! For in his arrogance he said, "When I get there I will make Jerusalem a cemetery of Jews."

⁵But the all-seeing Lord, the God of Israel, struck him with an incurable and invisible blow. As soon as he stopped speaking he was seized with a pain in his bowels, for which there was no relief, and with sharp internal tortures—⁶and that very justly, for he had tortured the bowels of others with many and strange inflictions. ⁷Yet he did not in any way stop his insolence, but was even more filled with arrogance, breathing fire in his rage against the Jews, and giving orders to drive even faster. And so it came about that he fell out of his chariot as it was rushing along, and the fall was so hard as to torture every limb of his body. ⁸Thus he who only a little while before had thought in his superhuman arrogance that he could command the waves of the sea, and had imagined that he could weigh the high mountains in a balance, was brought down to earth and carried in a litter, making the power of God manifest to all. ⁹And so the ungodly man's body swarmed with worms, and while he was still living in anguish and pain, his flesh rotted away, and because of the stench the whole army felt revulsion at his decay. ¹⁰Because of his intolerable stench no one was able to carry the man who a little while before had thought that he could touch the stars of heaven. ¹¹Then it was that, broken in spirit, he began to lose much of his arrogance and to come to his senses under the scourge of God, for he was tortured with pain every moment. ¹²And when he could not endure his own stench, he uttered these words, "It is right to be subject to God; mortals should not think that they are equal to God."^{*}

Antiochus Makes a Promise to God

¹³Then the abominable fellow made a vow to the Lord, who would no longer have

mercy on him, stating ¹⁴that the holy city, which he was hurrying to level to the ground and to make a cemetery, he was now declaring to be free; ¹⁵and the Jews, whom he had not considered worth burying but had planned to throw out with their children for the wild animals and for the birds to eat, he would make, all of them, equal to citizens of Athens; ¹⁶and the holy sanctuary, which he had formerly plundered, he would adorn with the finest offerings; and all the holy vessels he would give back, many times over; and the expenses incurred for the sacrifices he would provide from his own revenues; ¹⁷and in addition to all this he also would become a Jew and would visit every inhabited place to proclaim the power of God. ¹⁸But when his sufferings did not in any way abate, for the judgment of God had justly come upon him, he gave up all hope for himself and wrote to the Jews the following letter, in the form of a supplication. This was its content:

Antiochus's Letter and Death

¹⁹"To his worthy Jewish citizens, Antiochus their king and general sends hearty greetings and good wishes for their health and prosperity. ²⁰If you and your children are well and your affairs are as you wish, I am glad. As my hope is in heaven, ²¹I remember with affection your esteem and goodwill. On my way back from the region of Persia I suffered an annoying illness, and I have deemed it necessary to take thought for the general security of all. ²²I do not despair of my condition, for I have good hope of recovering from my illness, ²³but I observed that my father, on the occasions when he made expeditions into the upper country, appointed his successor, ²⁴so that, if anything unexpected happened or any unwelcome news came, the people throughout the realm would not be troubled, for they would know to whom the government was left. ²⁵Moreover, I understand how the princes along the borders and the neighbors of my kingdom keep watching for opportunities and waiting to see what will happen. So I have appointed my son Antiochus to be king, whom I have often entrusted and commended to most of you when I hurried off to the upper provinces; and I have written to him what is written here. ²⁶I therefore urge and beg you

^{*} Or not think thoughts proper only to God

to remember the public and private services rendered to you and to maintain your present goodwill, each of you, toward me and my son. ²⁷For I am sure that he will follow my policy and will treat you with moderation and kindness."

28 So the murderer and blasphemer, having endured the more intense suffering, such as he had inflicted on others, came to the end of his life by a most pitiable fate, among the mountains in a strange land. ²⁹And Philip, one of his courtiers, took his body home; then, fearing the son of Antiochus, he withdrew to Ptolemy Philometor in Egypt.

Purification of the Temple

10 Now Maccabeus and his followers, the Lord leading them on, recovered the temple and the city; ²they tore down the altars that had been built in the public square by the foreigners, and also destroyed the sacred precincts. ³They purified the sanctuary, and made another altar of sacrifice; then, striking fire out of flint, they offered sacrifices, after a lapse of two years, and they offered incense and lighted lamps and set out the bread of the Presence. ⁴When they had done this, they fell prostrate and implored the Lord that they might never again fall into such misfortunes, but that, if they should ever sin, they might be disciplined by him with forbearance and not be handed over to blasphemous and barbarous nations. ⁵It happened that on the same day on which the sanctuary had been profaned by the foreigners, the purification of the sanctuary took place, that is, on the twenty-fifth day of the same month, which was Chislev. ⁶They celebrated it for eight days with rejoicing, in the manner of the festival of booths, remembering how not long before, during the festival of booths, they had been wandering in the mountains and caves like wild animals. ⁷Therefore, carrying ivy-wreathed wands and beautiful branches and also fronds of palm, they offered hymns of thanksgiving to him who had given success to the purifying of his own holy place. ⁸They decreed by public edict, ratified by vote, that the whole nation of the Jews should observe these days every year.

9 Such then was the end of Antiochus, who was called Epiphanes.

Accession of Antiochus Eupator

10 Now we will tell what took place under Antiochus Eupator, who was the son of that ungodly man, and will give a brief summary of the principal calamities of the wars. ¹¹This man, when he succeeded to the kingdom, appointed one Lysias to have charge of the government and to be chief governor of Coelesyria and Phoenicia. ¹²Ptolemy, who was called Macron, took the lead in showing justice to the Jews because of the wrong that had been done to them, and attempted to maintain peaceful relations with them. ¹³As a result he was accused before Eupator by the king's Friends. He heard himself called a traitor at every turn, because he had abandoned Cyprus, which Philometor had entrusted to him, and had gone over to Antiochus Epiphanes. Unable to command the respect due his office,⁹ he took poison and ended his life.

Campaign in Idumea

14 When Gorgias became governor of the region, he maintained a force of mercenaries, and at every turn kept attacking the Jews. ¹⁵Besides this, the Idumeans, who had control of important strongholds, were harassing the Jews; they received those who were banished from Jerusalem, and endeavored to keep up the war. ¹⁶But Maccabeus and his forces, after making solemn supplication and imploring God to fight on their side, rushed to the strongholds of the Idumeans. ¹⁷Attacking them vigorously, they gained possession of the places, and beat off all who fought upon the wall, and slaughtered those whom they encountered, killing no fewer than twenty thousand.

18 When at least nine thousand took refuge in two very strong towers well equipped to withstand a siege, ¹⁹Maccabeus left Simon and Joseph, and also Zacchaeus and his troops, a force sufficient to besiege them; and he himself set off for places where he was more urgently needed. ²⁰But those with Simon, who were money-hungry, were bribed by some of those who were in the towers, and on receiving seventy thousand drachmas let some of them slip away. ²¹When word of what had happened came to Maccabeus, he gathered the leaders of the people, and accused these men of having sold their kindred for money by setting

⁹ Cn: Meaning of Gk uncertain

their enemies free to fight against them. ²²Then he killed these men who had turned traitor, and immediately captured the two towers. ²³Having success at arms in everything he undertook, he destroyed more than twenty thousand in the two strongholds.

Judas Defeats Timothy

24 Now Timothy, who had been defeated by the Jews before, gathered a tremendous force of mercenaries and collected the cavalry from Asia in no small number. He came on, intending to take Judea by storm. ²⁵As he drew near, Maccabeus and his men sprinkled dust on their heads and girded their loins with sackcloth, in supplication to God. ²⁶Falling upon the steps before the altar, they implored him to be gracious to them and to be an enemy to their enemies and an adversary to their adversaries, as the law declares. ²⁷And rising from their prayer they took up their arms and advanced a considerable distance from the city; and when they came near the enemy they halted. ²⁸Just as dawn was breaking, the two armies joined battle, the one having as pledge of success and victory not only their valor but also their reliance on the Lord, while the other made rage their leader in the fight.

29 When the battle became fierce, there appeared to the enemy from heaven five resplendent men on horses with golden bridles, and they were leading the Jews. ³⁰Two of them took Maccabeus between them, and shielding him with their own armor and weapons, they kept him from being wounded. They showered arrows and thunderbolts on the enemy, so that, confused and blinded, they were thrown into disorder and cut to pieces. ³¹Twenty thousand five hundred were slaughtered, besides six hundred cavalry.

32 Timothy himself fled to a stronghold called Gazara, especially well garrisoned, where Chaereas was commander. ³³Then Maccabeus and his men were glad, and they besieged the fort for four days. ³⁴The men within, relying on the strength of the place, kept blaspheming terribly and uttering wicked words. ³⁵But at dawn of the fifth day, twenty young men in the army of Maccabeus, fired with anger because of the blasphemies, bravely stormed the wall and with savage fury cut down everyone they

met. ³⁶Others who came up in the same way wheeled around against the defenders and set fire to the towers; they kindled fires and burned the blasphemers alive. Others broke open the gates and let in the rest of the force, and they occupied the city. ³⁷They killed Timothy, who was hiding in a cistern, and his brother Chaereas, and Apollophanes. ³⁸When they had accomplished these things, with hymns and thanksgivings they blessed the Lord who shows great kindness to Israel and gives them the victory.

Lysias Besieges Beth-zur

11 Very soon after this, Lysias, the king's guardian and kinsman, who was in charge of the government, being vexed at what had happened, ²gathered about eighty thousand infantry and all his cavalry and came against the Jews. He intended to make the city a home for Greeks, ³and to levy tribute on the temple as he did on the sacred places of the other nations, and to put up the high priesthood for sale every year. ⁴He took no account whatever of the power of God, but was elated with his ten thousands of infantry, and his thousands of cavalry, and his eighty elephants. ⁵Invading Judea, he approached Beth-zur, which was a fortified place about five stadia² from Jerusalem, and pressed it hard.

6 When Maccabeus and his men got word that Lysias^a was besieging the strongholds, they and all the people, with lamentations and tears, prayed the Lord to send a good angel to save Israel. ⁷Maccabeus himself was the first to take up arms, and he urged the others to risk their lives with him to aid their kindred. Then they eagerly rushed off together. ⁸And there, while they were still near Jerusalem, a horseman appeared at their head, clothed in white and brandishing weapons of gold. ⁹And together they all praised the merciful God, and were strengthened in heart, ready to assail not only humans but the wildest animals or walls of iron. ¹⁰They advanced in battle order, having their heavenly ally, for the Lord had mercy on them. ¹¹They hurled themselves like lions against the enemy, and laid low eleven thousand of them and sixteen hundred cavalry, and forced all the rest to flee. ¹²Most of them got away stripped and wounded, and Lysias himself escaped by disgraceful flight.

² Meaning of Gk uncertain ^a Gk *he*

Lysias Makes Peace with the Jews

13 As he was not without intelligence, he pondered over the defeat that had befallen him, and realized that the Hebrews were invincible because the mighty God fought on their side. So he sent to them¹⁴ and persuaded them to settle everything on just terms, promising that he would persuade the king, constraining him to be their friend.¹⁵ Maccabeus, having regard for the common good, agreed to all that Lysias urged. For the king granted every request in behalf of the Jews which Maccabeus delivered to Lysias in writing.

16 The letter written to the Jews by Lysias was to this effect:

"Lysias to the people of the Jews, greetings. ¹⁷John and Absalom, who were sent by you, have delivered your signed communication and have asked about the matters indicated in it. ¹⁸I have informed the king of everything that needed to be brought before him, and he has agreed to what was possible. ¹⁹If you will maintain your goodwill toward the government, I will endeavor in the future to help promote your welfare. ²⁰And concerning such matters and their details, I have ordered these men and my representatives to confer with you. ²¹Farewell. The one hundred forty-eighth year,^c Dioscorinthius twenty-fourth."

22 The king's letter ran thus:

"King Antiochus to his brother Lysias, greetings. ²³Now that our father has gone on to the gods, we desire that the subjects of the kingdom be undisturbed in caring for their own affairs. ²⁴We have heard that the Jews do not consent to our father's change to Greek customs, but prefer their own way of living and ask that their own customs be allowed them. ²⁵Accordingly, since we choose that this nation also should be free from disturbance, our decision is that their temple be restored to them and that they shall live according to the customs of their ancestors. ²⁶You will do well, therefore, to send word to them and give them pledges of friendship, so that they may know our policy and be of good cheer and go on happily in the conduct of their own affairs."

27 To the nation the king's letter was as follows:

"King Antiochus to the senate of the Jews and to the other Jews, greetings. ²⁸If you are well, it is as we desire. We also are in good health. ²⁹Menelaus has informed us that

you wish to return home and look after your own affairs. ³⁰Therefore those who go home by the thirtieth of Xanthicus will have our pledge of friendship and full permission ³¹for the Jews to enjoy their own food and laws, just as formerly, and none of them shall be molested in any way for what may have been done in ignorance. ³²And I have also sent Menelaus to encourage you. ³³Farewell. The one hundred forty-eighth year,^c Xanthicus fifteenth."

34 The Romans also sent them a letter, which read thus:

"Quintus Memmius and Titus Manius, envoys of the Romans, to the people of the Jews, greetings. ³⁵With regard to what Lysias the kinsman of the king has granted you, we also give consent. ³⁶But as to the matters that he decided are to be referred to the king, as soon as you have considered them, send some one promptly so that we may make proposals appropriate for you. For we are on our way to Antioch. ³⁷Therefore make haste and send messengers so that we may have your judgment. ³⁸Farewell. The one hundred forty-eighth year,^c Xanthicus fifteenth."

Incidents at Joppa and Jamnia

12 When this agreement had been reached, Lysias returned to the king, and the Jews went about their farming.

2 But some of the governors in various places, Timothy and Apollonius son of Gennaëus, as well as Hieronymus and Demophon, and in addition to these Nicanor the governor of Cyprus, would not let them live quietly and in peace. ³And the people of Joppa did so ungodly a deed as this: they invited the Jews who lived among them to embark, with their wives and children, on boats that they had provided, as though there were no ill will to the Jews;^d ⁴and this was done by public vote of the city. When they accepted, because they wished to live peaceably and suspected nothing, the people of Joppa^e took them out to sea and drowned them, at least two hundred. ⁵When Judas heard of the cruelty visited on his compatriots, he gave orders to his men ⁶and, calling upon God, the righteous judge, attacked the murderers of his kindred. He set fire to the harbor by night, burned the boats, and massacred those who had taken

^b Meaning of Gk uncertain ^c 164 B.C. ^d Gk to them ^e Gk they

refuge there. ⁷Then, because the city's gates were closed, he withdrew, intending to come again and root out the whole community of Joppa. ⁸But learning that the people in Jamnia meant in the same way to wipe out the Jews who were living among them, ⁹he attacked the Jamnites by night and set fire to the harbor and the fleet, so that the glow of the light was seen in Jerusalem, thirty miles' distant.

The Campaign in Gilead

10 When they had gone more than a mile^a from there, on their march against Timothy, at least five thousand Arabs with five hundred cavalry attacked them. ¹¹After a hard fight, Judas and his companions, with God's help, were victorious. The defeated nomads begged Judas to grant them pledges of friendship, promising to give him livestock and to help his people^b in all other ways. ¹²Judas, realizing that they might indeed be useful in many ways, agreed to make peace with them; and after receiving his pledges they went back to their tents.

13 He also attacked a certain town that was strongly fortified with earthworks^c and walls, and inhabited by all sorts of Gentiles. Its name was Caspin. ¹⁴Those who were within, relying on the strength of the walls and on their supply of provisions, behaved most insolently toward Judas and his men, railing at them and even blaspheming and saying unholy things. ¹⁵But Judas and his men, calling against the great Sovereign of the world, who without battering-rams or engines of war overthrew Jericho in the days of Joshua, rushed furiously upon the walls. ¹⁶They took the town by the will of God, and slaughtered untold numbers, so that the adjoining lake, a quarter of a mile^d wide, appeared to be running over with blood.

Judas Defeats Timothy's Army

17 When they had gone ninety-five miles^e from there, they came to Charax, to the Jews who are called Toubiani. ¹⁸They did not find Timothy in that region, for he had by then left there without accomplishing anything, though in one place he had left a very strong garrison. ¹⁹Dositheus and Sosipater, who were captains under

Maccabeus, marched out and destroyed those whom Timothy had left in the stronghold, more than ten thousand men. ²⁰But Maccabeus arranged his army in divisions, set men^f in command of the divisions, and hurried after Timothy, who had with him one hundred twenty thousand infantry and two thousand five hundred cavalry. ²¹When Timothy learned of the approach of Judas, he sent off the women and the children and also the baggage to a place called Carnaim; for that place was hard to besiege and difficult of access because of the narrowness of all the approaches. ²²But when Judas's first division appeared, terror and fear came over the enemy at the manifestation to them of him who sees all things. In their flight they rushed headlong in every direction, so that often they were injured by their own men and pierced by the points of their own swords. ²³Judas pressed the pursuit with the utmost vigor, putting the sinners to the sword, and destroyed as many as thirty thousand.

24 Timothy himself fell into the hands of Dositheus and Sosipater and their men. With great guile he begged them to let him go in safety, because he held the parents of most of them, and the brothers of some, to whom no consideration would be shown. ²⁵And when with many words he had confirmed his solemn promise to restore them unharmed, they let him go, for the sake of saving their kindred.

Judas Wins Other Victories

26 Then Judas^g marched against Carnaim and the temple of Atargatis, and slaughtered twenty-five thousand people. ²⁷After the rout and destruction of these, he marched also against Ephron, a fortified town where Lysias lived with multitudes of people of all nationalities.^h Stalwart young men took their stand before the walls and made a vigorous defense; and great stores of war engines and missiles were there. ²⁸But the Jewsⁱ called upon the Sovereign who with power shatters the might of his enemies, and they got the town into their hands, and killed as many as twenty-five thousand of those who were in it.

29 Setting out from there, they hastened to Scythopolis, which is seventy-five miles^j from Jerusalem. ³⁰But when the Jews who

^l Gk two hundred forty stadia ^a Gk nine stadia ^b Gk them ^c Meaning of Gk uncertain ^d Gk two stadia ^e Gk seven hundred fifty stadia ^f Gk he ^g Gk they ^h Gk six hundred stadia

lived there bore witness to the goodwill that the people of Scythopolis had shown them and their kind treatment of them in times of misfortune. ³¹they thanked them and exhorted them to be well disposed to their race in the future also. Then they went up to Jerusalem, as the festival of weeks was close at hand.

Judas Defeats Gorgias

32 After the festival called Pentecost, they hurried against Gorgias, the governor of Idumea, ³³who came out with three thousand infantry and four hundred cavalry. ³⁴When they joined battle, it happened that a few of the Jews fell. ³⁵But a certain Dositheus, one of Bacenor's men, who was on horseback and was a strong man, caught hold of Gorgias, and grasping his cloak was dragging him off by main strength, wishing to take the accursed man alive, when one of the Thracian cavalry bore down on him and cut off his arm; so Gorgias escaped and reached Marisa.

36 As Esdris and his men had been fighting for a long time and were weary, Judas called upon the Lord to show himself their ally and leader in the battle. ³⁷In the language of their ancestors he raised the battle cry, with hymns; then he charged against Gorgias's troops when they were not expecting it, and put them to flight.

Prayers for Those Killed in Battle

38 Then Judas assembled his army and went to the city of Adullam. As the seventh day was coming on, they purified themselves according to the custom, and kept the sabbath there.

39 On the next day, as had now become necessary, Judas and his men went to take up the bodies of the fallen and to bring them back to lie with their kindred in the sepulchres of their ancestors. ⁴⁰Then under the tunic of each one of the dead they found sacred tokens of the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbids the Jews to wear. And it became clear to all that this was the reason these men had fallen. ⁴¹So they all blessed the ways of the Lord, the righteous judge, who reveals the things that are hidden; ⁴²and they turned to supplication, praying that the sin that had been committed might

be wholly blotted out. The noble Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves free from sin, for they had seen with their own eyes what had happened as the result of the sin of those who had fallen. ⁴³He also took up a collection, man by man, to the amount of two thousand drachmas of silver, and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. In doing this he acted very well and honorably, taking account of the resurrection. ⁴⁴For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. ⁴⁵But if he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Therefore he made atonement for the dead, so that they might be delivered from their sin.

Menelaus Is Put to Death

13 In the one hundred forty-ninth year^a word came to Judas and his men that Antiochus Eupator was coming with a great army against Judea, ²and with him Lysias, his guardian, who had charge of the government. Each of them had a Greek force of one hundred ten thousand infantry, five thousand three hundred cavalry, twenty-two elephants, and three hundred chariots armed with scythes.

3 Menelaus also joined them and with utter hypocrisy urged Antiochus on, not for the sake of his country's welfare, but because he thought that he would be established in office. ⁴But the King of kings aroused the anger of Antiochus against the scoundrel; and when Lysias informed him that this man was to blame for all the trouble, he ordered them to take him to Beroea and to put him to death by the method that is customary in that place. ⁵For there is a tower there, fifty cubits high, full of ashes, and it has a rim running around it that on all sides inclines precipitously into the ashes. ⁶There they all push to destruction anyone guilty of sacrilege or notorious for other crimes. ⁷By such a fate it came about that Menelaus the lawbreaker died, without even burial in the earth. ⁸And this was eminently just; because he had committed many sins against the altar whose fire and ashes were holy, he met his death in ashes.

^a 163 B.C.

A Battle Near the City of Modein

9 The king with barbarous arrogance was coming to show the Jews things far worse than those that had been done⁹ in his father's time. ¹⁰But when Judas heard of this, he ordered the people to call upon the Lord day and night, now if ever to help those who were on the point of being deprived of the law and their country and the holy temple, ¹¹and not to let the people who had just begun to revive fall into the hands of the blasphemous Gentiles. ¹²When they had all joined in the same petition and had implored the merciful Lord with weeping and fasting and lying prostrate for three days without ceasing, Judas exhorted them and ordered them to stand ready.

¹³ After consulting privately with the elders, he determined to march out and decide the matter by the help of God before the king's army could enter Judea and get possession of the city. ¹⁴So, committing the decision to the Creator of the world and exhorting his troops to fight bravely to the death for the laws, temple, city, country, and commonwealth, he pitched his camp near Modein. ¹⁵He gave his troops the watchword, "God's victory," and with a picked force of the bravest young men, he attacked the king's pavilion at night and killed as many as two thousand men in the camp. He stabbed⁹ the leading elephant and its rider. ¹⁶In the end they filled the camp with terror and confusion and withdrew in triumph. ¹⁷This happened, just as day was dawning, because the Lord's help protected him.

Antiochus Makes a Treaty with the Jews

¹⁸ The king, having had a taste of the daring of the Jews, tried strategy in attacking their positions. ¹⁹He advanced against Beth-zur, a strong fortress of the Jews, was turned back, attacked again,⁷ and was defeated. ²⁰Judas sent in to the garrison whatever was necessary. ²¹But Rhodocus, a man from the ranks of the Jews, gave secret information to the enemy; he was sought for, caught, and put in prison. ²²The king negotiated a second time with the people in Beth-zur, gave pledges, received theirs, withdrew, attacked Judas and his men, was defeated; ²³he got word that Philip, who had been left in charge of the government, had

revolted in Antioch; he was dismayed, called in the Jews, yielded and swore to observe all their rights, settled with them and offered sacrifice, honored the sanctuary and showed generosity to the holy place. ²⁴He received Maccabeus, left Hegemonides as governor from Ptolemais to Gerar, ²⁵and went to Ptolemais. The people of Ptolemais were indignant over the treaty; in fact they were so angry that they wanted to annul its terms.⁹ ²⁶Lysias took the public platform, made the best possible defense, convinced them, appeased them, gained their goodwill, and set out for Antioch. This is how the king's attack and withdrawal turned out.

Alcimus Speaks against Judas

14 Three years later, word came to Judas and his men that Demetrius son of Seleucus had sailed into the harbor of Tripolis with a strong army and a fleet, ²and had taken possession of the country, having made away with Antiochus and his guardian Lysias.

³ Now a certain Alcimus, who had formerly been high priest but had willfully defiled himself in the times of separation,⁵ realized that there was no way for him to be safe or to have access again to the holy altar, ⁴and went to King Demetrius in about the one hundred fifty-first year,¹ presenting to him a crown of gold and a palm, and besides these some of the customary olive branches from the temple. During that day he kept quiet. ⁵But he found an opportunity that furthered his mad purpose when he was invited by Demetrius to a meeting of the council and was asked about the attitude and intentions of the Jews. He answered:

⁶ "Those of the Jews who are called Hasideans, whose leader is Judas Maccabeus, are keeping up war and stirring up sedition, and will not let the kingdom attain tranquility. ⁷Therefore I have laid aside my ancestral glory—I mean the high priesthood—and have now come here, ⁸first because I am genuinely concerned for the interests of the king, and second because I have regard also for my compatriots. For through the folly of those whom I have mentioned our whole nation is now in no small misfortune. ⁹Since you are acquainted, O king, with the details of this matter, may

⁹ Or the worst of the things that had been done ⁹ Meaning of Gk uncertain ¹ Or faltered ⁵ Other ancient authorities read of mixing ¹ 161 B.C.

it please you to take thought for our country and our hard-pressed nation with the gracious kindness that you show to all.¹⁰For as long as Judas lives, it is impossible for the government to find peace."¹¹When he had said this, the rest of the king's Friends,^a who were hostile to Judas, quickly inflamed Demetrius still more.¹²He immediately chose Nicanor, who had been in command of the elephants, appointed him governor of Judea, and sent him off¹³ with orders to kill Judas and scatter his troops, and to install Alcimus as high priest of the great^v temple.¹⁴And the Gentiles throughout Judea, who had fled before^w Judas, flocked to join Nicanor, thinking that the misfortunes and calamities of the Jews would mean prosperity for themselves.

Nicanor Makes Friends with Judas

15 When the Jews^x heard of Nicanor's coming and the gathering of the Gentiles, they sprinkled dust on their heads and prayed to him who established his own people forever and always upholds his own heritage by manifesting himself.¹⁶At the command of the leader, they^y set out from there immediately and engaged them in battle at a village called Dessau.¹⁷Simon, the brother of Judas, had encountered Nicanor, but had been temporarily^z checked because of the sudden consternation created by the enemy.

18 Nevertheless Nicanor, hearing of the valor of Judas and his troops and their courage in battle for their country, shrank from deciding the issue by bloodshed.¹⁹Therefore he sent Posidonius, Theodotus, and Mattathias to give and receive pledges of friendship.²⁰When the terms had been fully considered, and the leader had informed the people, and it had appeared that they were of one mind, they agreed to the covenant.²¹The leaders^a set a day on which to meet by themselves. A chariot came forward from each army; seats of honor were set in place;²²Judas posted armed men in readiness at key places to prevent sudden treachery on the part of the enemy; so they duly held the consultation.

23 Nicanor stayed on in Jerusalem and did nothing out of the way, but dismissed the flocks of people that had gathered.²⁴And he kept Judas always in his presence; he was warmly attached to the man.²⁵He

urged him to marry and have children; so Judas^b married, settled down, and shared the common life.

Nicanor Turns against Judas

26 But when Alcimus noticed their goodwill for one another, he took the covenant that had been made and went to Demetrius. He told him that Nicanor was disloyal to the government, since he had appointed that conspirator against the kingdom, Judas, to be his successor.²⁷The king became excited and, provoked by the false accusations of that depraved man, wrote to Nicanor, stating that he was displeased with the covenant and commanding him to send Maccabeus to Antioch as a prisoner without delay.

28 When this message came to Nicanor, he was troubled and grieved that he had to annul their agreement when the man had done no wrong.²⁹Since it was not possible to oppose the king, he watched for an opportunity to accomplish this by a stratagem.³⁰But Maccabeus, noticing that Nicanor was more austere in his dealings with him and was meeting him more rudely than had been his custom, concluded that this austerity did not spring from the best motives. So he gathered not a few of his men, and went into hiding from Nicanor.³¹When the latter became aware that he had been cleverly outwitted by the man, he went to the great^b and holy temple while the priests were offering the customary sacrifices, and commanded them to hand the man over.³²When they declared on oath that they did not know where the man was whom he wanted,³³he stretched out his right hand toward the sanctuary, and swore this oath: "If you do not hand Judas over to me as a prisoner, I will level this shrine of God to the ground and tear down the altar, and build here a splendid temple to Dionysus."

34 Having said this, he went away. Then the priests stretched out their hands toward heaven and called upon the constant Defender of our nation, in these words: ³⁵"O Lord of all, though you have need of nothing, you were pleased that there should be a temple for your habitation among us; ³⁶so now, O holy One, Lord of all holiness, keep undefiled forever this house that has been so recently purified."

^a Gk of the Friends ^v Gk greatest ^w Meaning of Gk uncertain ^x Gk they ^y Gk he ^z Other ancient authorities read slowly ^a Gk They ^b Gk greatest

Razis Dies for His Country

37 A certain Razis, one of the elders of Jerusalem, was denounced to Nicanor as a man who loved his compatriots and was very well thought of and for his goodwill was called father of the Jews. ³⁸In former times, when there was no mingling with the Gentiles, he had been accused of Judaism, and he had most zealously risked body and life for Judaism. ³⁹Nicanor, wishing to exhibit the enmity that he had for the Jews, sent more than five hundred soldiers to arrest him; ⁴⁰for he thought that by arresting him he would do them an injury. ⁴¹When the troops were about to capture the tower and were forcing the door of the courtyard, they ordered that fire be brought and the doors burned. Being surrounded, Razis^d fell upon his own sword, ⁴²preferring to die nobly rather than to fall into the hands of sinners and suffer outrages unworthy of his noble birth. ⁴³But in the heat of the struggle he did not hit exactly, and the crowd was now rushing in through the doors. He courageously ran up on the wall, and bravely threw himself down into the crowd. ⁴⁴But as they quickly drew back, a space opened and he fell in the middle of the empty space. ⁴⁵Still alive and aflame with anger, he rose, and though his blood gushed forth and his wounds were severe he ran through the crowd; and standing upon a steep rock, ⁴⁶with his blood now completely drained from him, he tore out his entrails, took them in both hands and hurled them at the crowd, calling upon the Lord of life and spirit to give them back to him again. This was the manner of his death.

Nicanor's Arrogance

15 When Nicanor heard that Judas and his troops were in the region of Samaria, he made plans to attack them with complete safety on the day of rest. ²When the Jews who were compelled to follow him said, "Do not destroy so savagely and barbarously, but show respect for the day that he who sees all things has honored and hallowed above other days," ³the thrice-cursed wretch asked if there were a sovereign in heaven who had commanded the keeping of the sabbath day. ⁴When they declared, "It is the living Lord himself, the Sovereign in heaven, who ordered us to observe the seventh day," ⁵he replied, "But

I am a sovereign also, on earth, and I command you to take up arms and finish the king's business." Nevertheless, he did not succeed in carrying out his abominable design.

Judas Prepares the Jews for Battle

6 This Nicanor in his utter boastfulness and arrogance had determined to erect a public monument of victory over Judas and his forces. ⁷But Maccabeus did not cease to trust with all confidence that he would get help from the Lord. ⁸He exhorted his troops not to fear the attack of the Gentiles, but to keep in mind the former times when help had come to them from heaven, and so to look for the victory that the Almighty would give them. ⁹Encouraging them from the law and the prophets, and reminding them also of the struggles they had won, he made them the more eager. ¹⁰When he had aroused their courage, he issued his orders, at the same time pointing out the perfidy of the Gentiles and their violation of oaths. ¹¹He armed each of them not so much with confidence in shields and spears as with the inspiration of brave words, and he cheered them all by relating a dream, a sort of vision,^c which was worthy of belief.

12 What he saw was this: Onias, who had been high priest, a noble and good man, of modest bearing and gentle manner, one who spoke fittingly and had been trained from childhood in all that belongs to excellence, was praying with outstretched hands for the whole body of the Jews. ¹³Then in the same fashion another appeared, distinguished by his gray hair and dignity, and of marvelous majesty and authority. ¹⁴And Onias spoke, saying, "This is a man who loves the family of Israel and prays much for the people and the holy city—Jeremiah, the prophet of God." ¹⁵Jeremiah stretched out his right hand and gave to Judas a golden sword, and as he gave it he addressed him thus: ¹⁶"Take this holy sword, a gift from God, with which you will strike down your adversaries."

17 Encouraged by the words of Judas, so noble and so effective in arousing valor and awaking courage in the souls of the young, they determined not to carry on a campaign but to attack bravely, and to decide the matter by fighting hand to hand with all courage, because the city and the sanctuary

^c Meaning of Gk uncertain ^d Gk he ^e Or to remain in camp

and the temple were in danger. ¹⁸Their concern for wives and children, and also for brothers and sisters¹ and relatives, lay upon them less heavily: their greatest and first fear was for the consecrated sanctuary. ¹⁹And those who had to remain in the city were in no little distress, being anxious over the encounter in the open country.

The Defeat and Death of Nicanor

20 When all were now looking forward to the coming issue, and the enemy was already close at hand with their army drawn up for battle, the elephants⁹ strategically stationed and the cavalry deployed on the flanks, ²¹Maccabeus, observing the masses that were in front of him and the varied supply of arms and the savagery of the elephants, stretched out his hands toward heaven and called upon the Lord who works wonders; for he knew that it is not by arms, but as the Lord^h decides, that he gains the victory for those who deserve it. ²²He called upon him in these words: "O Lord, you sent your angel in the time of King Hezekiah of Judea, and he killed fully one hundred eighty-five thousand in the camp of Sennacherib. ²³So now, O Sovereign of the heavens, send a good angel to spread terror and trembling before us. ²⁴By the might of your arm may these blasphemers who come against your holy people be struck down." With these words he ended his prayer.

25 Nicanor and his troops advanced with trumpets and battle songs, ²⁶but Judas and his troops met the enemy in battle with invocations to God and prayers. ²⁷So, fighting with their hands and praying to God in their hearts, they laid low at least thirty-five thousand, and were greatly gladdened by God's manifestation.

28 When the action was over and they were returning with joy, they recognized Nicanor, lying dead, in full armor. ²⁹Then there was shouting and tumult, and they

blessed the Sovereign Lord in the language of their ancestors. ³⁰Then the man who was ever in body and soul the defender of his people, the man who maintained his youthful goodwill toward his compatriots, ordered them to cut off Nicanor's head and arm and carry them to Jerusalem. ³¹When he arrived there and had called his compatriots together and stationed the priests before the altar, he sent for those who were in the citadel. ³²He showed them the vile Nicanor's head and that profane man's arm, which had been boastfully stretched out against the holy house of the Almighty. ³³He cut out the tongue of the ungodly Nicanor and said that he would feed it piecemeal to the birds and would hang up these rewards of his folly opposite the sanctuary. ³⁴And they all, looking to heaven, blessed the Lord who had manifested himself, saying, "Blessed is he who has kept his own place undefiled!" ³⁵Judas¹ hung Nicanor's head from the citadel, a clear and conspicuous sign to everyone of the help of the Lord. ³⁶And they all decreed by public vote never to let this day go unobserved, but to celebrate the thirteenth day of the twelfth month—which is called Adar in the Aramaic language—the day before Mordecai's day.

37 This, then, is how matters turned out with Nicanor, and from that time the city has been in the possession of the Hebrews. So I will here end my story.

The Compiler's Epilogue

38 If it is well told and to the point, that is what I myself desired; if it is poorly done and mediocre, that was the best I could do. ³⁹For just as it is harmful to drink wine alone, or, again, to drink water alone, while wine mixed with water is sweet and delicious and enhances one's enjoyment, so also the style of the story delights the ears of those who read the work. And here will be the end.

¹ Gk for brothers ⁹ Gk animals ^h Gk he ¹ Gk He

3 MACCABEES

The Battle of Raphia

1 When Philopator learned from those who returned that the regions that he had controlled had been seized by Antiochus, he gave orders to all his forces, both infantry and cavalry, took with him his sister Arsinoë, and marched out to the region near Raphia, where the army of Antiochus was encamped. ²But a certain Theodotus, determined to carry out the plot he had devised, took with him the best of the Ptolemaic arms that had been previously issued to him,^a and crossed over by night to the tent of Ptolemy, intending single-handed to kill him and thereby end the war. ³But Dositheus, known as the son of Drimylus, a Jew by birth who later changed his religion and apostatized from the ancestral traditions, had led the king away and arranged that a certain insignificant man should sleep in the tent; and so it turned out that this man incurred the vengeance meant for the king.^b ⁴When a bitter fight resulted, and matters were turning out rather in favor of Antiochus, Arsinoë went to the troops with wailing and tears, her locks all disheveled, and exhorted them to defend themselves and their children and wives bravely, promising to give them each two minas of gold if they won the battle. ⁵And so it came about that the enemy was routed in the action, and many captives also were taken. ⁶Now that he had foiled the plot, Ptolemy^c decided to visit the neighboring cities and encourage them. ⁷By doing this, and by endowing their sacred enclosures with gifts, he strengthened the morale of his subjects.

Philopator Attempts to Enter the Temple

8 Since the Jews had sent some of their council and elders to greet him, to bring him gifts of welcome, and to congratulate him on what had happened, he was all the more eager to visit them as soon as possible. ⁹After he had arrived in Jerusalem, he offered sacrifice to the supreme God^d and made thank offerings and did what was fitting for the holy place.^e Then, upon en-

tering the place and being impressed by its excellence and its beauty, ¹⁰he marveled at the good order of the temple, and conceived a desire to enter the sanctuary. ¹¹When they said that this was not permitted, because not even members of their own nation were allowed to enter, not even all of the priests, but only the high priest who was pre-eminent over all—and he only once a year—the king was by no means persuaded. ¹²Even after the law had been read to him, he did not cease to maintain that he ought to enter, saying, “Even if those men are deprived of this honor, I ought not to be.” ¹³And he inquired why, when he entered every other temple,^f no one there had stopped him. ¹⁴And someone answered thoughtlessly that it was wrong to take that as a portent.^g ¹⁵“But since this has happened,” the king^c said, “why should not I at least enter, whether they wish it or not?”

Jewish Resistance to Ptolemy

16 Then the priests in all their vestments prostrated themselves and entreated the supreme God^d to aid in the present situation and to avert the violence of this evil design, and they filled the temple with cries and tears; ¹⁷those who remained behind in the city were agitated and hurried out, supposing that something mysterious was occurring. ¹⁸Young women who had been secluded in their chambers rushed out with their mothers, sprinkled their hair with dust,^h and filled the streets with groans and lamentations. ¹⁹Those women who had recently been arrayed for marriage abandoned the bridal chambersⁱ prepared for wedded union, and, neglecting proper modesty, in a disorderly rush flocked together in the city. ²⁰Mothers and nurses abandoned even newborn children here and there, some in houses and some in the streets, and without a backward look they crowded together at the most high temple. ²¹Various were the supplications of those gathered there because of what the king was profanely plotting. ²²In addition, the bolder of the citizens would not tolerate the completion of his plans or

^a Or the best of the Ptolemaic soldiers previously put under his command ^b Gk that one ^c Gk he ^d Gk the greatest God ^e Gk the place ^f Or entered the temple precincts ^g Or to boast of this ^h Other ancient authorities add and ashes ⁱ Or the canopies

the fulfillment of his intended purpose.²³ They shouted to their compatriots to take arms and die courageously for the ancestral law, and created a considerable disturbance in the holy place;¹ and being barely restrained by the old men and the elders,² they resorted to the same posture of supplication as the others.²⁴ Meanwhile the crowd, as before, was engaged in prayer,²⁵ while the elders near the king tried in various ways to change his arrogant mind from the plan that he had conceived.²⁶ But he, in his arrogance, took heed of nothing, and began now to approach, determined to bring the aforesaid plan to a conclusion.²⁷ When those who were around him observed this, they turned, together with our people, to call upon him who has all power to defend them in the present trouble and not to overlook this unlawful and haughty deed.²⁸ The continuous, vehement, and concerted cry of the crowds³ resulted in an immense uproar; ²⁹for it seemed that not only the people but also the walls and the whole earth around echoed, because indeed all at that time⁴ preferred death to the profanation of the place.

The Prayer of the High Priest Simon

2 Then the high priest Simon, facing the sanctuary, bending his knees and extending his hands with calm dignity, prayed as follows: " ²Lord, Lord, king of the heavens, and sovereign of all creation, holy among the holy ones, the only ruler, almighty, give attention to us who are suffering grievously from an impious and profane man, puffed up in his audacity and power. ³For you, the creator of all things and the governor of all, are a just Ruler, and you judge those who have done anything in insolence and arrogance. ⁴You destroyed those who in the past committed injustice, among whom were even giants who trusted in their strength and boldness, whom you destroyed by bringing on them a boundless flood. ⁵You consumed with fire and sulfur the people of Sodom who acted arrogantly, who were notorious for their vices;⁶ and you made them an example to those who should come afterward. ⁶You made known your mighty power by inflicting many and varied punishments on the audacious Phar-

ah who had enslaved your holy people Israel. ⁷And when he pursued them with chariots and a mass of troops, you overwhelmed him in the depths of the sea, but carried through safely those who had put their confidence in you, the Ruler over the whole creation. ⁸And when they had seen works of your hands, they praised you, the Almighty. ⁹You, O King, when you had created the boundless and immeasurable earth, chose this city and sanctified this place for your name, though you have no need of anything; and when you had glorified it by your magnificent manifestation,⁸ you made it a firm foundation for the glory of your great and honored name. ¹⁰And because you love the house of Israel, you promised that if we should have reverses and tribulation should overtake us, you would listen to our petition when we come to this place and pray. ¹¹And indeed you are faithful and true. ¹²And because oftentimes when our fathers were oppressed you helped them in their humiliation, and rescued them from great evils, ¹³see now, O holy King, that because of our many and great sins we are crushed with suffering, subjected to our enemies, and overtaken by helplessness. ¹⁴In our downfall this audacious and profane man undertakes to violate the holy place on earth dedicated to your glorious name. ¹⁵For your dwelling is the heaven of heavens, unapproachable by human beings. ¹⁶But because you graciously bestowed your glory on your people Israel, you sanctified this place. ¹⁷Do not punish us for the defilement committed by these men, or call us to account for this profanation, otherwise the transgressors will boast in their wrath and exult in the arrogance of their tongue, saying, ¹⁸"We have trampled down the house of the sanctuary as the houses of the abominations are trampled down." ¹⁹Wipe away our sins and disperse our errors, and reveal your mercy at this hour. ²⁰Speedily let your mercies overtake us, and put praises in the mouth of those who are downcast and broken in spirit, and give us peace."

God's Punishment of Ptolemy

21 Thereupon God, who oversees all things, the first Father of all, holy among

¹ Gk the place ² Other ancient authorities read *priests* ³ Other ancient authorities read *vehement cry of the assembled crowds* ⁴ Other ancient authorities lack *at that time* ⁵ Other ancient authorities lack *verse*

⁶ Other ancient authorities read *secret in their vices* ⁸ Or *epiphany*

the holy ones, having heard the lawful supplication, scourged him who had exalted himself in insolence and audacity.²² He shook him on this side and that as a reed is shaken by the wind, so that he lay helpless on the ground and, besides being paralyzed in his limbs, was unable even to speak, since he was smitten^a by a righteous judgment.²³ Then both friends and bodyguards, seeing the severe punishment that had overtaken him, and fearing that he would lose his life, quickly dragged him out, panic-stricken in their exceedingly great fear.²⁴ After a while he recovered, and though he had been punished, he by no means repented, but went away uttering bitter threats.

Hostile Measures against the Jews

25 When he arrived in Egypt, he increased in his deeds of malice, abetted by the previously mentioned drinking companions and comrades, who were strangers to everything just.²⁶ He was not content with his uncounted licentious deeds, but even continued with such audacity that he framed evil reports in the various localities; and many of his friends, intently observing the king's purpose, themselves also followed his will.²⁷ He proposed to inflict public disgrace on the Jewish community,⁷ and he set up a stone^s on the tower in the courtyard with this inscription:²⁸ "None of those who do not sacrifice shall enter their sanctuaries, and all Jews shall be subjected to a registration involving poll tax and to the status of slaves. Those who object to this are to be taken by force and put to death;²⁹ those who are registered are also to be branded on their bodies by fire with the ivy-leaf symbol of Dionysus, and they shall also be reduced to their former limited status."³⁰ In order that he might not appear to be an enemy of all, he inscribed below: "But if any of them prefer to join those who have been initiated into the mysteries, they shall have equal citizenship with the Alexandrians."

31 Now some, however, with an obvious abhorrence of the price to be exacted for maintaining the religion of their city,⁴ readily gave themselves up, since they expected to enhance their reputation by their future association with the king.³² But the majority acted firmly with a courageous spirit and did not abandon their religion; and by paying money in exchange for life they confidently

attempted to save themselves from the registration.³³ They remained resolutely hopeful of obtaining help, and they abhorred those who separated themselves from them, considering them to be enemies of the Jewish nation,⁷ and depriving them of companionship and mutual help.

The Jews and Their Neighbors

3 When the impious king comprehended this situation, he became so infuriated that not only was he enraged against those Jews who lived in Alexandria, but was still more bitterly hostile toward those in the countryside; and he ordered that all should promptly be gathered into one place, and put to death by the most cruel means.² While these matters were being arranged, a hostile rumor was circulated against the Jewish nation by some who conspired to do them ill, a pretext being given by a report that they hindered others^a from the observance of their customs.³ The Jews, however, continued to maintain goodwill and unswerving loyalty toward the dynasty;⁴ but because they worshiped God and conducted themselves by his law, they kept their separateness with respect to foods. For this reason they appeared hateful to some;⁵ but since they adorned their style of life with the good deeds of upright people, they were established in good repute with everyone.⁶ Nevertheless those of other races paid no heed to their good service to their nation, which was common talk among all;⁷ instead they gossiped about the differences in worship and foods, alleging that these people were loyal neither to the king nor to his authorities, but were hostile and greatly opposed to his government. So they attached no ordinary reproach to them.

8 The Greeks in the city, though wronged in no way, when they saw an unexpected tumult around these people and the crowds that suddenly were forming, were not strong enough to help them, for they lived under tyranny. They did try to console them, being grieved at the situation, and expected that matters would change;⁹ for such a great community ought not be left to its fate when it had committed no offense.¹⁰ And already some of their neighbors and friends and business associates had taken some of them aside privately and were pledging to protect them and to exert more earnest efforts for their assistance.

^a Other ancient authorities read *pierced* ⁷ Gk the nation ⁸ Gk *stele* ⁴ Meaning of Gk uncertain ^a Gk *them*

Ptolemy's Decree That All Jews Be Arrested

11 Then the king, boastful of his present good fortune, and not considering the might of the supreme God,^v but assuming that he would persevere constantly in his same purpose, wrote this letter against them:

12 "King Ptolemy Philopator to his generals and soldiers in Egypt and all its districts, greetings and good health:

13 "I myself and our government are faring well.¹⁴When our expedition took place in Asia, as you yourselves know, it was brought to conclusion, according to plan, by the gods' deliberate alliance with us in battle,¹⁵and we considered that we should not rule the nations inhabiting Coelesyria and Phoenicia by the power of the spear, but should cherish them with clemency and great benevolence, gladly treating them well.¹⁶And when we had granted very great revenues to the temples in the cities, we came on to Jerusalem also, and went up to honor the temple of those wicked people, who never cease from their folly.¹⁷They accepted our presence by word, but insincerely by deed, because when we proposed to enter their inner temple and honor it with magnificent and most beautiful offerings,¹⁸they were carried away by their traditional arrogance, and excluded us from entering; but they were spared the exercise of our power because of the benevolence that we have toward all.¹⁹By maintaining their manifest ill-will toward us, they become the only people among all nations who hold their heads high in defiance of kings and their own benefactors, and are unwilling to regard any action as sincere.

20 "But we, when we arrived in Egypt victorious, accommodated ourselves to their folly and did as was proper, since we treat all nations with benevolence.²¹Among other things, we made known to all our amnesty toward their compatriots here, both because of their alliance with us and the myriad affairs liberally entrusted to them from the beginning; and we ventured to make a change, by deciding both to deem them worthy of Alexandrian citizenship and to make them participants in our regular religious rites."²²But in their innate malice they took this in a contrary spirit, and disdained what is good. Since they incline constantly to evil,²³they not only spurn the

priceless citizenship, but also both by speech and by silence they abominate those few among them who are sincerely disposed toward us; in every situation, in accordance with their infamous way of life, they secretly suspect that we may soon alter our policy.²⁴Therefore, fully convinced by these indications that they are ill-disposed toward us in every way, we have taken precautions so that, if a sudden disorder later arises against us, we shall not have these impious people behind our backs as traitors and barbarous enemies.²⁵Therefore we have given orders that, as soon as this letter arrives, you are to send to us those who live among you, together with their wives and children, with insulting and harsh treatment, and bound securely with iron fetters, to suffer the sure and shameful death that befits enemies.²⁶For when all of these have been punished, we are sure that for the remaining time the government will be established for ourselves in good order and in the best state.²⁷But those who shelter any of the Jews, whether old people or children or even infants, will be tortured to death with the most hateful torments, together with their families.²⁸Any who are willing to give information will receive the property of those who incur the punishment, and also two thousand drachmas from the royal treasury, and will be awarded their freedom.²⁹Every place detected sheltering a Jew is to be made unapproachable and burned with fire, and shall become useless for all time to any mortal creature."³⁰The letter was written in the above form.

The Jews Deported to Alexandria

4 In every place, then, where this decree arrived, a feast at public expense was arranged for the Gentiles with shouts and gladness, for the inveterate enmity that had long ago been in their minds was now made evident and outspoken.²But among the Jews there was incessant mourning, lamentation, and tearful cries; everywhere their hearts were burning, and they groaned because of the unexpected destruction that had suddenly been decreed for them.³What district or city, or what habitable place at all, or what streets were not filled with mourning and wailing for them?⁴For with such a harsh and ruthless spirit were they

^v Gk the greatest God ^w Other ancient authorities read partners of our regular priests ^x Gk crowned with freedom

being sent off, all together, by the generals in the several cities, that at the sight of their unusual punishments, even some of their enemies, perceiving the common object of pity before their eyes, reflected on the uncertainty of life and shed tears at the most miserable expulsion of these people. ⁵For a multitude of gray-headed old men, sluggish and bent with age, was being led away, forced to march at a swift pace by the violence with which they were driven in such a shameful manner. ⁶And young women who had just entered the bridal chamber^a to share married life exchanged joy for wailing, their myrrh-perfumed hair sprinkled with ashes, and were carried away unveiled, all together raising a lament instead of a wedding song, as they were torn by the harsh treatment of the heathen.² ⁷In bonds and in public view they were violently dragged along as far as the place of embarkation. ⁸Their husbands, in the prime of youth, their necks encircled with ropes instead of garlands, spent the remaining days of their marriage festival in lamentations instead of good cheer and youthful revelry, seeing death immediately before them.^c ⁹They were brought on board like wild animals, driven under the constraint of iron bonds; some were fastened by the neck to the benches of the boats, others had their feet secured by unbreakable fetters,¹⁰ and in addition they were confined under a solid deck, so that, with their eyes in total darkness, they would undergo treatment befitting traitors during the whole voyage.

The Jews Imprisoned at Schedia

¹¹ When these people had been brought to the place called Schedia, and the voyage was concluded as the king had decreed, he commanded that they should be enclosed in the hippodrome that had been built with a monstrous perimeter wall in front of the city, and that was well suited to make them an obvious spectacle to all coming back into the city and to those from the city^b going out into the country, so that they could neither communicate with the king's forces nor in any way claim to be inside the circuit of the city.^c ¹²And when this had happened, the king, hearing that the Jews' compatriots from the city frequently went out in secret

to lament bitterly the ignoble misfortune of their kindred, ¹³ordered in his rage that these people be dealt with in precisely the same fashion as the others, not omitting any detail of their punishment. ¹⁴The entire race was to be registered individually, not for the hard labor that has been briefly mentioned before, but to be tortured with the outrages that he had ordered, and at the end to be destroyed in the space of a single day. ¹⁵The registration of these people was therefore conducted with bitter haste and zealous intensity from the rising of the sun until its setting, coming to an end after forty days but still uncompleted.

¹⁶ The king was greatly and continually filled with joy, organizing feasts in honor of all his idols, with a mind alienated from truth and with a profane mouth, praising speechless things that are not able even to communicate or to come to one's help, and uttering improper words against the supreme God.^d ¹⁷But after the previously mentioned interval of time the scribes declared to the king that they were no longer able to take the census of the Jews because of their immense number, ¹⁸though most of them were still in the country, some still residing in their homes, and some at the place;^e the task was impossible for all the generals in Egypt. ¹⁹After he had threatened them severely, charging that they had been bribed to contrive a means of escape, he was clearly convinced about the matter ²⁰when they said and proved that both the paper^f and the pens they used for writing had already given out. ²¹But this was an act of the invincible providence of him who was aiding the Jews from heaven.

Execution of the Jews Is Twice Thwarted

5 Then the king, completely inflexible, was filled with overpowering anger and wrath; so he summoned Hermon, keeper of the elephants, ²and ordered him on the following day to drug all the elephants—five hundred in number—with large handfuls of frankincense and plenty of unmixed wine, and to drive them in, maddened by the lavish abundance of drink, so that the Jews might meet their doom. ³When he had given these orders he returned to his feasting, together with those of his Friends and

^a Or the canopy ² Other ancient authorities read as though torn by heathen whelps ^c Gk seeing Hades already lying at their feet ^b Gk those of them ^c Or claim protection of the walls; meaning of Gk uncertain ^d Gk the greatest God ^e Other ancient authorities read on the way ^f Or paper factory

of the army who were especially hostile toward the Jews. ⁴And Hermon, keeper of the elephants, proceeded faithfully to carry out the orders. ⁵The servants in charge of the Jews^a went out in the evening and bound the hands of the wretched people and arranged for their continued custody through the night, convinced that the whole nation would experience its final destruction. ⁶For to the Gentiles it appeared that the Jews were left without any aid, ⁷because in their bonds they were forcibly confined on every side. But with tears and a voice hard to silence they all called upon the Almighty Lord and Ruler of all power, their merciful God and Father, praying ⁸that he avert with vengeance the evil plot against them and in a glorious manifestation rescue them from the fate now prepared for them. ⁹So their entreaty ascended fervently to heaven.

10 Hermon, however, when he had drugged the pitiless elephants until they had been filled with a great abundance of wine and satiated with frankincense, presented himself at the courtyard early in the morning to report to the king about these preparations. ¹¹But the Lord^b sent upon the king a portion of sleep, that beneficence that from the beginning, night and day, is bestowed by him who grants it to whomever he wishes. ¹²And by the action of the Lord he was overcome by so pleasant and deep a sleep^c that he quite failed in his lawless purpose and was completely frustrated in his inflexible plan. ¹³Then the Jews, since they had escaped the appointed hour, praised their holy God and again implored him who is easily reconciled to show the might of his all-powerful hand to the arrogant Gentiles.

14 But now, since it was nearly the middle of the tenth hour, the person who was in charge of the invitations, seeing that the guests were assembled, approached the king and nudged him. ¹⁵And when he had with difficulty roused him, he pointed out that the hour of the banquet was already slipping by, and he gave him an account of the situation. ¹⁶The king, after considering this, returned to his drinking, and ordered those present for the banquet to recline opposite him. ¹⁷When this was done he urged them to give themselves over to revelry and to

make the present^d portion of the banquet joyful by celebrating all the more. ¹⁸After the party had been going on for some time, the king summoned Hermon and with sharp threats demanded to know why the Jews had been allowed to remain alive through the present day. ¹⁹But when he, with the corroboration of his Friends, pointed out that while it was still night he had carried out completely the order given him, ²⁰the king,^e possessed by a savagery worse than that of Phalaris, said that the Jews^f were benefited by today's sleep, "but," he added, "tomorrow without delay prepare the elephants in the same way for the destruction of the lawless Jews!" ²¹When the king had spoken, all those present readily and joyfully with one accord gave their approval, and all went to their own homes. ²²But they did not so much employ the duration of the night in sleep as in devising all sorts of insults for those they thought to be doomed.

23 Then, as soon as the cock had crowed in the early morning, Hermon, having equipped^g the animals, began to move them along in the great colonnade. ²⁴The crowds of the city had been assembled for this most pitiful spectacle and they were eagerly waiting for daybreak. ²⁵But the Jews, at their last gasp—since the time had run out—stretched their hands toward heaven and with most tearful supplication and mournful dirges implored the supreme God^h to help them again at once. ²⁶The rays of the sun were not yet shed abroad, and while the king was receiving his Friends, Hermon arrived and invited him to come out, indicating that what the king desired was ready for action. ²⁷But he, on receiving the report and being struck by the unusual invitation to come out—since he had been completely overcome by incomprehension—inquired what the matter was for which this had been so zealously completed for him. ²⁸This was the act of God who rules over all things, for he had implanted in the king's mind a forgetfulness of the things he had previously devised. ²⁹Then Hermon and all the king's Friendsⁱ pointed out that the animals and the armed forces were ready, "O king, according to your eager purpose."^j

³⁰But at these words he was filled with an overpowering wrath, because by the provi-

^a Gk them ^b Gk he ^c Other ancient authorities add from evening until the ninth hour ^d Other ancient authorities read delayed (Gk untimely) ^e Gk they ^f Or armed ^g Gk the greatest God ^h Gk all the Friends ⁱ Other ancient authorities read pointed to the beasts and the armed forces, saying, "They are ready, O king, according to your eager purpose."

dence of God his whole mind had been deranged concerning these matters; and with a threatening look he said, ³¹"If your parents or children were present, I would have prepared them to be a rich feast for the savage animals instead of the Jews, who give me no ground for complaint and have exhibited to an extraordinary degree a full and firm loyalty to my ancestors. ³²In fact you would have been deprived of life instead of these, if it were not for an affection arising from our nurture in common and your usefulness." ³³So Hermon suffered an unexpected and dangerous threat, and his eyes wavered and his face fell. ³⁴The king's Friends one by one sullenly slipped away and dismissed[†] the assembled people to their own occupations. ³⁵Then the Jews, on hearing what the king had said, praised the manifest Lord God, King of kings, since this also was his aid that they had received.

³⁶The king, however, reconvened the party in the same manner and urged the guests to return to their celebrating. ³⁷After summoning Hermon he said in a threatening tone, "How many times, you poor wretch, must I give you orders about these things? ³⁸Equip[‡] the elephants now once more for the destruction of the Jews tomorrow!" ³⁹But the officials who were at table with him, wondering at his instability of mind, remonstrated as follows: ⁴⁰"O king, how long will you put us to the test, as though we are idiots, ordering now for a third time that they be destroyed, and again revoking your decree in the matter?" ⁴¹As a result the city is in a tumult because of its expectation; it is crowded with masses of people, and also in constant danger of being plundered."

⁴²At this the king, a Phalaris in everything and filled with madness, took no account of the changes of mind that had come about within him for the protection of the Jews, and he firmly swore an irrevocable oath that he would send them to death[‡] without delay, mangled by the knees and feet of the animals, ⁴³and would also march against Judea and rapidly level it to the ground with fire and spear, and by burning to the ground the temple inaccessible to him[‡] would quickly render it forever empty of those who offered sacrifices there. ⁴⁴Then the Friends and officers departed with great joy, and they confidently posted

the armed forces at the places in the city most favorable for keeping guard.

⁴⁵Now when the animals had been brought virtually to a state of madness, so to speak, by the very fragrant draughts of wine mixed with frankincense and had been equipped with frightful devices, the elephant keeper ⁴⁶entered at about dawn into the courtyard—the city now being filled with countless masses of people crowding their way into the hippodrome—and urged the king on to the matter at hand. ⁴⁷So he, when he had filled his impious mind with a deep rage, rushed out in full force along with the animals, wishing to witness, with invulnerable heart and with his own eyes, the grievous and pitiful destruction of the aforementioned people.

⁴⁸When the Jews saw the dust raised by the elephants going out at the gate and by the following armed forces, as well as by the trampling of the crowd, and heard the loud and tumultuous noise, ⁴⁹they thought that this was their last moment of life, the end of their most miserable suspense, and giving way to lamentation and groans they kissed each other, embracing relatives and falling into one another's arms—"parents and children, mothers and daughters, and others with babies at their breasts who were drawing their last milk. ⁵⁰Not only this, but when they considered the help that they had received before from heaven, they prostrated themselves with one accord on the ground, removing the babies from their breasts, ⁵¹and cried out in a very loud voice, imploring the Ruler over every power to manifest himself and be merciful to them, as they stood now at the gates of death."

The Prayer of Eleazar

6 Then a certain Eleazar, famous among the priests of the country, who had attained a ripe old age and throughout his life had been adorned with every virtue, directed the elders around him to stop calling upon the holy God, and he prayed as follows: ²"King of great power, Almighty God Most High, governing all creation with mercy, ³look upon the descendants of Abraham, O Father, upon the children of the sainted Jacob, a people of your consecrated portion who are perishing as foreigners in a foreign land. ⁴Pharaoh with his

[†] Other ancient authorities read *he dismissed* [‡] Or *Arm* [§] Other ancient authorities read *when the matter is in hand* [¶] Gk *Hades* ^{||} Gk *us* ^{**} Gk *falling upon their necks* ^{***} Gk *Hades*

abundance of chariots, the former ruler of this Egypt, exalted with lawless insolence and boastful tongue, you destroyed together with his arrogant army by drowning them in the sea, manifesting the light of your mercy on the nation of Israel. ⁵Sennacherib exulting in his countless forces, oppressive king of the Assyrians, who had already gained control of the whole world by the spear and was lifted up against your holy city, speaking grievous words with boasting and insolence, you, O Lord, broke in pieces, showing your power to many nations. ⁶The three companions in Babylon who had voluntarily surrendered their lives to the flames so as not to serve vain things, you rescued unharmed, even to a hair, moistening the fiery furnace with dew and turning the flame against all their enemies. ⁷Daniel, who through envious slanders was thrown down into the ground to lions as food for wild animals, you brought up to the light unharmed. ⁸And Jonah, wasting away in the belly of a huge, sea-born monster, you, Father, watched over and restored* unharmed to all his family. ⁹And now, you who hate insolence, all-merciful and protector of all, reveal yourself quickly to those of the nation of Israel[†]—who are being outrageously treated by the abominable and lawless Gentiles.

10 "Even if our lives have become entangled in impieties in our exile, rescue us from the hand of the enemy, and destroy us, Lord, by whatever fate you choose. ¹¹Let not the vain-minded praise their vanities[‡] at the destruction of your beloved people, saying, 'Not even their god has rescued them.' ¹²But you, O Eternal One, who have all might and all power, watch over us now and have mercy on us who by the senseless insolence of the lawless are being deprived of life in the manner of traitors. ¹³And let the Gentiles cower today in fear of your invincible might, O honored One, who have power to save the nation of Jacob. ¹⁴The whole throng of infants and their parents entreat you with tears. ¹⁵Let it be shown to all the Gentiles that you are with us, O Lord, and have not turned your face from us; but just as you have said, 'Not even when they were in the land of their enemies did I neglect them,' so accomplish it, O Lord."

Two Angels Rescue the Jews

16 Just as Eleazar was ending his prayer, the king arrived at the hippodrome with the animals and all the arrogance of his forces. ¹⁷And when the Jews observed this they raised great cries to heaven so that even the nearby valleys resounded with them and brought an uncontrollable terror upon the army. ¹⁸Then the most glorious, almighty, and true God revealed his holy face and opened the heavenly gates, from which two glorious angels of fearful aspect descended, visible to all but the Jews. ¹⁹They opposed the forces of the enemy and filled them with confusion and terror, binding them with immovable shackles. ²⁰Even the king began to shudder bodily, and he forgot his sullen insolence. ²¹The animals turned back upon the armed forces following them and began trampling and destroying them.

22 Then the king's anger was turned to pity and tears because of the things that he had devised beforehand. ²³For when he heard the shouting and saw them all fallen headlong to destruction, he wept and angrily threatened his Friends, saying, ²⁴"You are committing treason and surpassing tyrants in cruelty; and even me, your benefactor, you are now attempting to deprive of dominion and life by secretly devising acts of no advantage to the kingdom. ²⁵Who has driven from their homes those who faithfully kept our country's fortresses, and foolishly gathered every one of them here? ²⁶Who is it that has so lawlessly encompassed with outrageous treatment those who from the beginning differed from[§] all nations in their goodwill toward us and often have accepted willingly the worst of human dangers? ²⁷Loose and untie their unjust bonds! Send them back to their homes in peace, begging pardon for your former actions![¶] ²⁸Release the children of the almighty and living God of heaven, who from the time of our ancestors until now has granted an unimpeded and notable stability to our government." ²⁹These then were the things he said; and the Jews, immediately released, praised their holy God and Savior, since they now had escaped death.

The Jews Celebrate Their Deliverance

30 Then the king, when he had returned to the city, summoned the official in charge

* Other ancient authorities read *rescued and restored*; others, *mercifully restored* † Other ancient authorities read *to the saints of Israel* ‡ Or *bless their vain gods* § Or *excelled above* ¶ Other ancient authorities read *revoking your former commands*

of the revenues and ordered him to provide to the Jews both wines and everything else needed for a festival of seven days, deciding that they should celebrate their rescue with all joyfulness in that same place in which they had expected to meet their destruction.

³¹Accordingly those disgracefully treated and near to death,^b or rather, who stood at its gates, arranged for a banquet of deliverance instead of a bitter and lamentable death, and full of joy they apportioned to celebrants the place that had been prepared for their destruction and burial. ³²They stopped their chanting of dirges and took up the song of their ancestors, praising God, their Savior and worker of wonders.^c Putting an end to all mourning and wailing, they formed choruses^d as a sign of peaceful joy. ³³Like-wise also the king, after convening a great banquet to celebrate these events, gave thanks to heaven unceasingly and lavishly for the unexpected rescue that he^e had experienced. ³⁴Those who had previously believed that the Jews would be destroyed and become food for birds, and had joyfully registered them, groaned as they themselves were overcome by disgrace, and their fire-breathing boldness was ignominiously quenched.

³⁵The Jews, as we have said before, arranged the aforementioned choral group^f and passed the time in feasting to the accompaniment of joyous thanksgiving and psalms. ³⁶And when they had ordained a public rite for these things in their whole community and for their descendants, they instituted the observance of the aforesaid days as a festival, not for drinking and gluttony, but because of the deliverance that had come to them through God. ³⁷Then they petitioned the king, asking for dismissal to their homes. ³⁸So their registration was carried out from the twenty-fifth of Pachon to the fourth of Epeiph,^g for forty days; and their destruction was set for the fifth to the seventh of Epeiph,^h the three days ³⁹on which the Lord of all most gloriously revealed his mercy and rescued them all together and unharmed. ⁴⁰Then they feasted, being provided with everything by the king, until the fourteenth day,ⁱ on which also they made the petition for their dismissal. ⁴¹The king granted their request at once

and wrote the following letter for them to the generals in the cities, magnanimously expressing his concern:

Ptolemy's Letter on Behalf of the Jews

7 "King Ptolemy Philopator to the generals in Egypt and all in authority in his government, greetings and good health:

²"We ourselves and our children are faring well, the great God guiding our affairs according to our desire. ³Certain of our friends, frequently urging us with malicious intent, persuaded us to gather together the Jews of the kingdom in a body and to punish them with barbarous penalties as traitors; ⁴for they declared that our government would never be firmly established until this was accomplished, because of the ill-will that these people had toward all nations. ⁵They also led them out with harsh treatment as slaves, or rather as traitors, and, girding themselves with a cruelty more savage than that of Scythian custom, they tried without any inquiry or examination to put them to death. ⁶But we very severely threatened them for these acts, and in accordance with the clemency that we have toward all people we barely spared their lives. Since we have come to realize that the God of heaven surely defends the Jews, always taking their part as a father does for his children,⁷ and since we have taken into account the friendly and firm goodwill that they had toward us and our ancestors, we justly have acquitted them of every charge of whatever kind. ⁸We also have ordered all people to return to their own homes, with no one in any place^k doing them harm at all or reproaching them for the irrational things that have happened. ⁹For you should know that if we devise any evil against them or cause them any grief at all, we always shall have not a mortal but the Ruler over every power, the Most High God, in everything and inescapably as an antagonist to avenge such acts. Farewell."

The Jews Return Home with Joy

10 On receiving this letter the Jews^l did not immediately hurry to make their departure, but they requested of the king that at

^bGk Hades ^cOther ancient authorities read praising Israel and the wonder-working God; or praising Israel's Savior, the wonder-working God ^dOr dances ^eOther ancient authorities read they ^fOther ancient authorities read completely ^gOr dance ^hJuly 7—August 15 ⁱAugust 16—18 ^jAugust 25 ^kOther ancient authorities read way ^lGk they

their own hands those of the Jewish nation who had willfully transgressed against the holy God and the law of God should receive the punishment they deserved. ¹¹They declared that those who for the belly's sake had transgressed the divine commandments would never be favorably disposed toward the king's government. ¹²The king^m then, admitting and approving the truth of what they said, granted them a general license so that freely, and without royal authority or supervision, they might destroy those everywhere in his kingdom who had transgressed the law of God. ¹³When they had applauded him in fitting manner, their priests and the whole multitude shouted the Hallelujah and joyfully departed. ¹⁴And so on their way they punished and put to a public and shameful death any whom they met of their compatriots who had become defiled. ¹⁵In that day they put to death more than three hundred men; and they kept the day as a joyful festival, since they had destroyed the profaners. ¹⁶But those who had held fast to God even to death and had received the full enjoyment of deliverance began their departure from the city, crowned with all sorts of very fragrant flowers, joyfully and loudly giving thanks to the one God of their ancestors, the eternal Saviorⁿ of Israel, in words of praise and all kinds of melodious songs.

17 When they had arrived at Ptolemais, called "rose-bearing" because of a characteristic of the place, the fleet waited for them, in accordance with the common desire, for seven days. ¹⁸There they celebrated their deliverance,^o for the king had generously provided all things to them for their journey until all of them arrived at their own houses. ¹⁹And when they had all landed in peace with appropriate thanksgiving, there too in like manner they decided to observe these days as a joyous festival during the time of their stay. ²⁰Then, after inscribing them as holy on a pillar and dedicating a place of prayer at the site of the festival, they departed unharmed, free, and overjoyed, since at the king's command they had all of them been brought safely by land and sea and river to their own homes. ²¹They also possessed greater prestige among their enemies, being held in honor and awe; and they were not subject at all to confiscation of their belongings by any one. ²²Besides, they all recovered all of their property, in accordance with the registration, so that those who held any of it restored it to them with extreme fear.^p So the supreme God perfectly performed great deeds for their deliverance. ²³Blessed be the Deliverer of Israel through all times! Amen.

^m Gk He ⁿ Other ancient authorities read the holy Savior; others, the holy one ^o Gk they made a cup of deliverance ^p Other ancient authorities read with a very large supplement

